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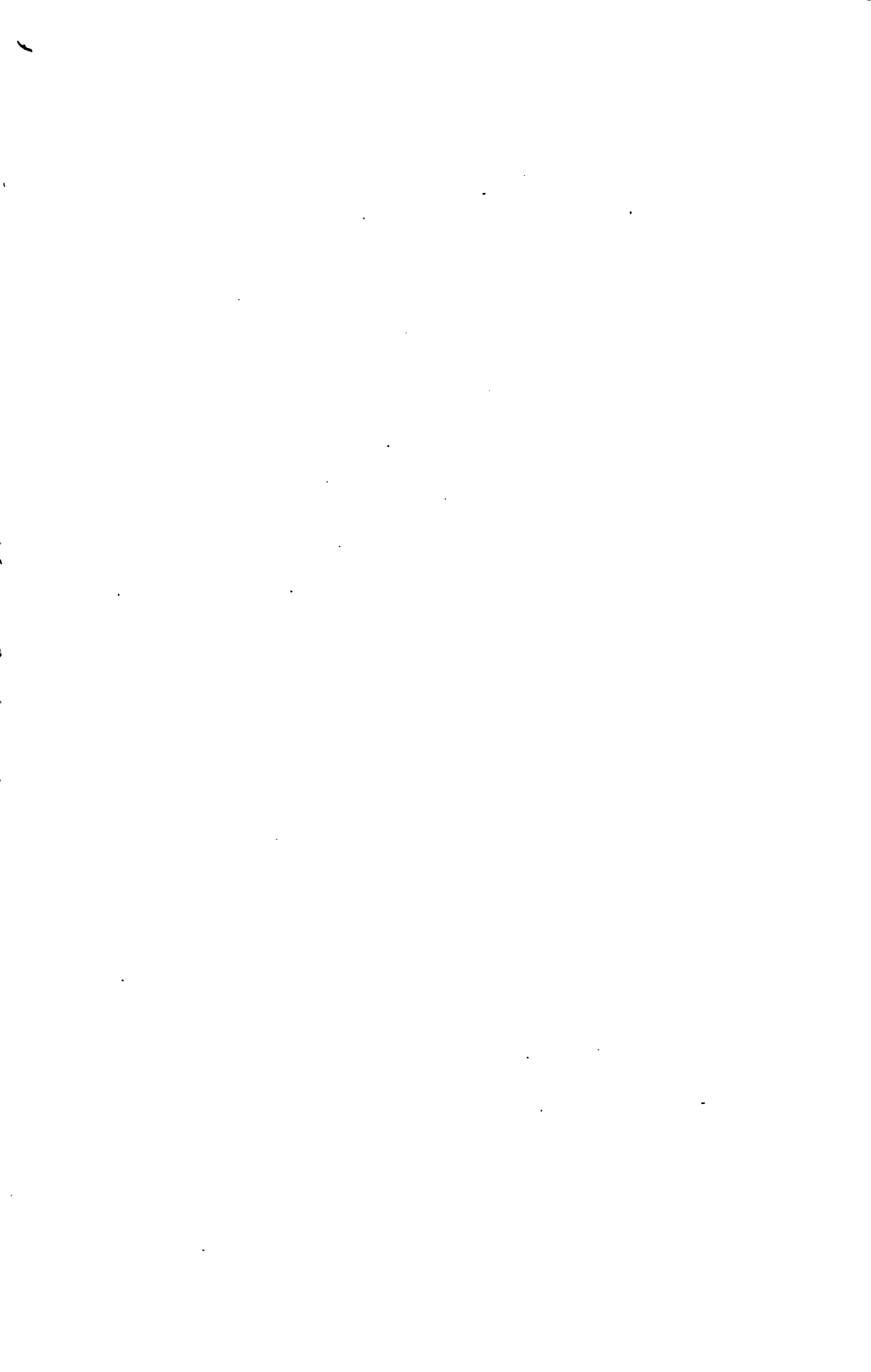
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*Right Hon<sup>ble</sup>*  
*Sir Robert Peel Bart.*

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*12<sup>a</sup> Burrowes Adams. 1838.*









THE CAVE OF THE WINDS.

1848

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE



*Proof*

254

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE







WANDERINGS AND EXCURSIONS

IN

NORTH WALES.

BY THOMAS ROSCOE, ESQ.



WITH FIFTY-ONE ENGRAVINGS, BY RADCLYFFE,

FROM DRAWINGS,

BY CATTERMOLLE, COX, CRESWICK, &c.

LONDON:

C. TILT, AND SIMPKIN AND CO.

WRIGHTSON AND WEBB, BIRMINGHAM.

MDCCCXXXVI.





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## P R E F A C E .

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EVERY age has its prevailing fashion, and that of the present is, assuredly, pictorial embellishment—illustration in all its forms and branches. Our most distinguished living poets, and, indeed, writers of every class, seldom now reappear before the world unrecommended by the genius of the painter, and the magic influence of the engraver.

In describing scenery familiar to almost every eye, how little chance has the tourist at home of winning even a passing glance without borrowing some grace from the sister arts! This intimate and still growing union—unlike many other unions political or social, and so agreeable to the taste of the times—seems to derive fresh strength from trial, (the result of advantages mutually derived, and of that golden harvest not unfrequently reaped) merely by the pleasant process of both parties agreeing to confer pleasure upon an enlightened public. Still, in an alliance every way so desirable, and calculated to gratify both the eye and the mind, the Author would fain enter his protest against the glory of letters being esteemed subsidiary to any other design, ranking, as it ought, first and pre-eminent in the march of intellect, as in the records of the human mind. For, without the slightest idea of challenging a controversy with his distinguished *collaborateurs*, was it not from the diviner thoughts of the Poet that the Painter first drew the fire and energy which emboldened him to follow, and strive to embody, those majestic creations of the muse of Homer, of Dante, and of Milton? Without these inspirations, could a Michael Angelo, or a Flaxman, have exhibited scenes to startle and to rouse the soul?

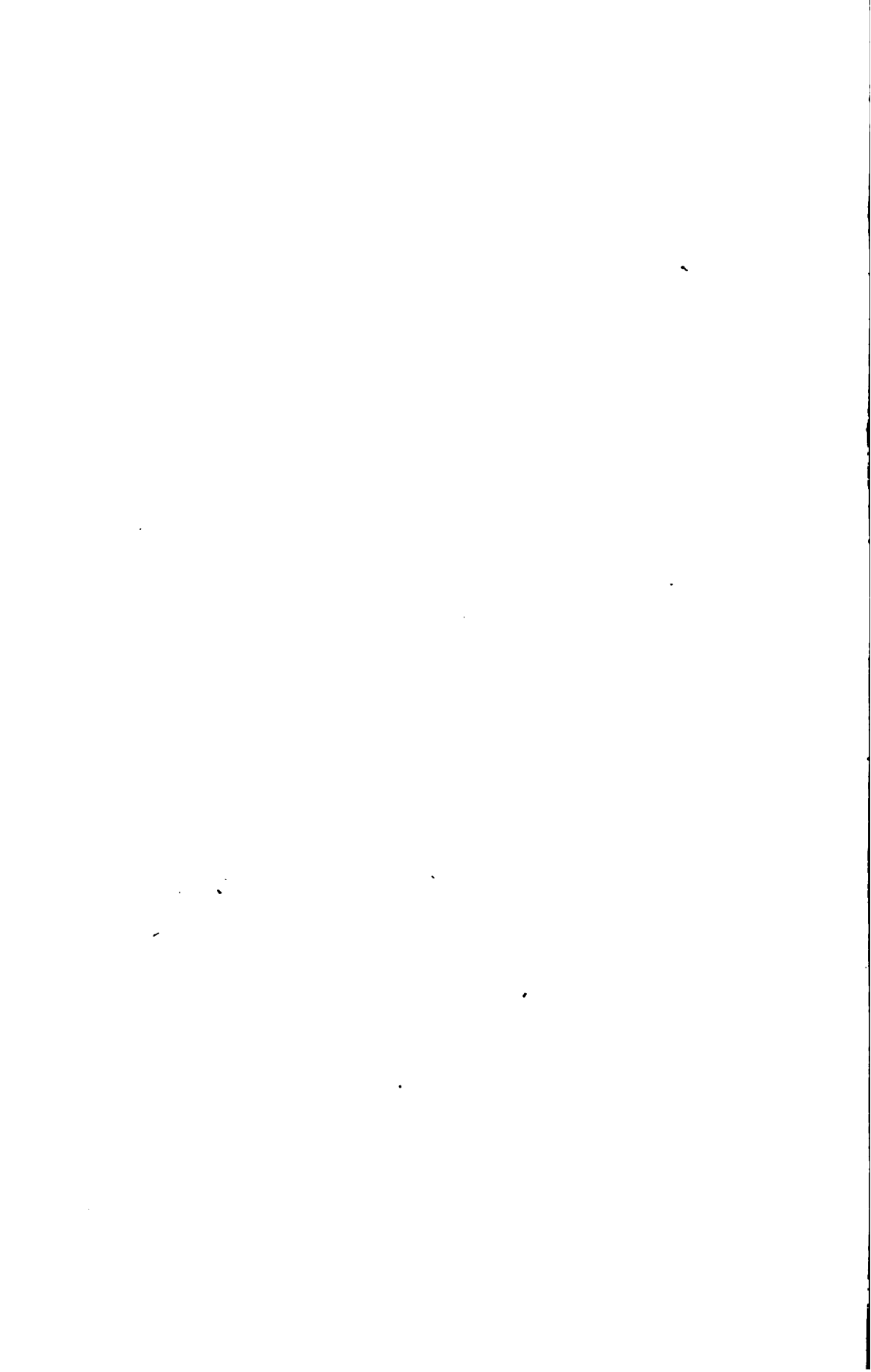
## PREFACE.

If sometimes they combine their terrors, at others this new and happy *combination* of the arts (happily for us, not amenable to the laws) is of a less imposing and more gentle character; and the artist and the author may walk arm-in-arm over the pleasant hills, by the green valleys or the sunny shores, ever ready 'to catch the Cynthia of the minute,' to take Nature as they find her, in her more joyous, her passionate, her solitary, and her mournful moods. *Here*, at least, their ambition has wholly been to interpret her language in a simple and faithful manner. *Theirs* has been less a work of labour than one of love. The Wanderer, in particular, had no view beyond that of amusing the reader by the way-side, leaving the judicious Artists to speak to his eye, and his imagination, in colours bright and manifold as the rainbow.

Light and sketchy as he could make it,—drawn from no small variety of sources, antiquarian, historical, descriptive, and anecdotal—the Author's highest ambition has been, to make his book a pleasant companion, and, like a pleasant companion, to throw a charm over an idle hour—relieve the gloom of some passing moment, a solitary evening, a rainy day, the tedium, in short, incidental to every tourist's path, be he a wayfarer at home, or far away.

He has sought to convey with fidelity his impressions of the noble and picturesque scenery of our British Alps—of the spirit of improvement every where manifested by the people—of their frank bearing, and peculiar traits,—with occasional notices of the distinguished characters,—warriors, bards, ornaments of the pulpit, or of the bench,—who may have shed lustre round their native land. Most of all, he could wish to convey some idea of the delight and the advantage to be derived, so near at hand, from an autumnal ramble among the hills and lakes of our ancient British home.







*Winifred's Well.*

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# Wanderings through North Wales.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

Pass where you please on plaine or mountain wilde;  
And beare yourself in sweete and civill sorte,  
And you shall sure be haulet with man and childe,  
Who will salute with gentle comely port  
The passers by: on braves they stand not so,  
Without good speeche to let a traveller go:  
They thinke it dette and dutie frank and free,  
In towne or felde to yeeld you cap and knee.

*Worthiness of Wales.*

OLD associations, and the pleasure derived from excursions in the principality in earlier days, and under brighter skies, were not without their influence in directing the Wanderer's steps on his return from other and distant scenes. Ties of early friendship, warm greeting and hospitality, with pleasant companionship, gave additional zest to the charm of rambling through a beautiful country, combining so many features to interest the imagination and to allure the eye.

The old British birth-place of elf and fairy lore, famed alike for triumphs of the sword and prizes of the lyre—to how many recollections did it give rise, as the Wanderer of many years looked back to those 'white days' so indelibly 'marked in memory's tablets'

with the thoughts of Hawarden, Erthig, Holywell, Downing, Wynn-stay, Penrhos, and other spots no less socially endeared. Like the wearied pilgrim, from some far-off clime, he seemed to renew his existence as the scenes familiar to his boyhood dawned upon him,—again he breathed the freshness of his morning hours, and impressions never wholly effaced filled his mind with mournful pleasure; for he now beheld the ancient seat of his forefathers,\* the spires of his native sea-port, and the wild blue hills of Cambria mingling with the distance.

They were still the same; but he looked as a stranger upon the old halls endeared to his childhood;—‘his pleasant places’ were filled with another youthful race—other faces which he knew not—and it seemed as if an absorbing love of the past, strong as the motives which led to the pious pilgrimages of old, dictated his onward course:—

“ Where, on the summit of the mountain brow,  
Frowns many a hoary tower, bold Cambria’s chiefs,  
Waving the banner’d dragon, dared to arms  
The Norman host. Breathing his native strains,  
Hoel, or lofty Taliessin, oft  
At the dim twilight hour, in pensive mood,  
Amid the silent halls o’ergrown with briars,  
Recals the festivals of old, when blazed  
The giant oak, and chieftains crown’d with mead  
The sculptured horn, while the high vaulted roof  
Re-echo’d to the honoured minstrel’s harp.†”

A strange feeling of the fleeting tenure of all human enjoyments filled his heart, as the Wanderer turned away and bent his steps towards the ancient retreats of British independence. With thoughts more awake to the memorable past, and to the scenes before him, from the circumstance of his previous rambles, he recognized many a favourite spot of his summer and autumnal haunts, when he was wont to spend days and weeks in exploring the wildest recesses of

---

\* Caerleon, the camp of the Legion.—*Chester.*

† A Tour through Parts of Wales.

the old glens, and lakes, and hills. And where is the human being who has not, like the Wanderer, had reason to contemplate, with sensations too strong for utterance, some well-remembered spot—who has not felt himself belonging to the past, even while, by his anticipations, he has turned tremblingly to catch the shadows of the mysterious future? It is in the presence of the mouldering monuments of ages past away—of a beloved country whose fame and splendour have vanished—of the old woods and hills no longer his own—that we can best sympathize with the transient show, and the sufferings of humanity, like the vanquished Roman who sat amidst the ruins of a fallen empire and wept.

In its monumental grandeur,—with the foot of heroic nations every where upon its soil,—no country presents objects of more peculiar and varied interest than Wales.

The prize of contending invaders, it was long the strong-hold of genuine British valour, and maintained, upwards of twelve centuries, unequal conflicts with nations far more powerful, yielding only on condition of being governed by a prince born in the country. And have not the sons of British kings, ever since the last of its heroic Llewellyns, assumed the name of Wales as the proudest of their titles?

Nothing more clearly proves the importance attached to its possession than this simple historical fact. Nor does the voluminous character of the works devoted to its illustration tend to diminish the curiosity with which we retrace its annals—call to mind its former power; and now its great natural advantages—its increasing usefulness and prosperity. No traveller enters the principality without being surprised with evidences of its singular history; its numerous antiquities being no less striking than its splendid and romantic scenery.

The arena of successive and fierce struggles, commencing with the dawn of the christian era—here met the Roman, the Saxon, the Dane, the Norman; and all these blending in the resistless English, Cambria still continued to bear a conspicuous part in the grand drama of British power and greatness.

The reduction of the native inhabitants and princes, in their mountain fastnesses, required the lapse of ages and the strength of combined nations to accomplish. These persevering efforts to vindicate their freedom gave rise to extraordinary exploits, which, terrible as is the picture of Cambrian wars, powerfully appeal to the imagination and sympathies of the reader. No subject, indeed, could be mentioned, which better repays the inquiries of the learned or the curious—even considered as a pleasant pursuit—than the earlier portions of Welsh history.

Allusion need scarcely be made to the popular belief respecting the Celtic origin of the *Cymri* or Welsh, in common with the ancient Gauls, and so many nations of the west. Nor is there much space to indulge in antiquarian researches respecting the language, the religion, or the druidical institutions of the country. But that devoted hereditary attachment shewn by the Britons for their native princes and their bards, a characteristic, doubtless from which sprung the genealogical study and pride of ancestry, so long held in high and honourable esteem, cannot be mentioned without applause.

The pedigrees of the princes and nobles of the land, in fact, formed an essential portion of Cambrian history; and to trace them was the peculiar province of the learned even till the days of Elizabeth. To fix the descent of noble tribes thus became no less the object of the bards than the celebration of warlike exploits; and there is no necessity to go back to the Phœnicians or the Romans, to shew their veneration for a custom originating in human nature, and more deeply engrafted on the character of the country from the peculiar circumstances which surrounded it.

It was from this fertile source *TYSSILIO* drew his information of the patriarch *Brutus*; and hence also the authority of the *TRIAD*ES, and the curious fragments of the bardish records up to the sixth century.

Through ages of despotism, in short, not less than under the iron sway of feudal vassalage,—the patriotic bards formed the most intelligent order of the Cambro-Britons. They preserved, in some

degree, the lineaments of humanity; they commemorated the struggles of their countrymen in strains worthy of liberty, such as brought down upon their heads the vengeance of the royal invaders.\*

The 'GODODIN' of the great Aneuryn,—extolled alike by Milton, by Gray, and Warton,—re-echoes, in wild and plaintive numbers, the feelings of the few distinguished patriots retreating from the hard-fought field; for of those few, like the unhappy Dante, was the poet himself.

From the ninth until nearly the twelfth century, the bards, authorized by their princes, classed the leading families into twenty tribes, of which five were declared royal and fifteen common.

Other founders of the old families, branches of which still exist in the modern gentry,—though not included in the tribes,—were distinguished for surpassing merit, and are no less honourably recorded both in history and by the muse.

The sense thus entertained of patriotic worth was shewn by the indignation excited against the name of the treacherous JESTYN's having found its way into the Royal Registry, while that of BROCHWEL, a noble prince of Powis, who held Pengwern (Shrewsbury) for his capital, had been passed over unnoticed. Two only of these interesting records have hitherto seen the light; and Mr. Yorke, of Erthig, in his amusing work on the Royal Tribes,—which it is to be regretted he never completed,—laments that so many valuable documents of ancient British history had yet to appear, and still wore only their native garb.†

\* Lochlin ploughs the watery way;  
There the Norman sails afar,  
Catch the winds, and join the war;  
Black and huge along they sweep,  
Burthens of the angry deep.

*Triumph of Owen.—Gray.*

† Alluding to the Triades, Tysilyo; the Latin works of Nennius, Giraldus, Paris, Polydore, Verunius, Pryce, Llwyd, Powel, and Caius; all indeed relating to Wales. They were, and still are for the most part, without Translations, though they have supplied valuable materials, and still more frequent authorities for the works of other writers.

The fifteen common tribes, with the respective representatives of each, formed the nobility, and to this source do the present nobility, and land owners of the principality, chiefly owe their descent. So enthusiastic, indeed, were the family attachments of the bards, and such the national veneration for the rights of lineage, that, in 1079, Griffith, son of Cynan, ranking first in the roll of the Royal Tribes, recovered his crown of North Wales from the Prince elect, Trahaern ap Caradog, at the battle of Carno. As lineal descendant of the great Roderick, he obtained the supremacy of the entire principality in accordance with one of the laws of his ancestor, Howel Dda, or Howel the Good, that the princes of South Wales and Powis should be considered tributary to the north.

Unfortunately for the peace and independence of the country, the respect for Royal Tribes and pure descent was not hedged in by the divinity of indefeasible right—by that idol of personal importance—the accumulative law of primogeniture, which combines and perpetuates power, and by that of legitimacy, which preserves it in a distinctive branch.

The line of succession, on the other hand, was arbitrarily broken, both by the princes and the nobility, while the equal division of property *by gavel kind* further augmented the evils and distractions consequent upon a series of invasions by formidable foes. In seasons of emergency, indeed, the confederated princes elected a dictator, who bore the title of Pendragon (head of all Britain), and among such are to be found the Arthurs and the Alfreds of their heroic times.\* This rare dignity was of old confined to one imperial line; but subsequently extended to two of its branches—the Cynethian and Cornwall families, till it ceased in the person of the last king of the ancient Britons.†

From the invasion of Cæsar until the reign of Griffith, in the twelfth century, the calamities of intestine feuds and foreign thral-

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\* For some admirable pictures of these bold and chivalrous days, the reader is referred to the poems of Warton, Gray, the minor poems of Milton, and their followers.

† Cadwallader.

dom had their source in the mistaken policy of subdividing laws. Thus, after his victory at Carno, this martial prince is said to have been surprised, and thrown into prison, by his rival. He escaped only, after long durance, by the daring act of a young Welshman, *Kynrig Hir*, or the Tall, who, taking advantage of the inebriety of the gaoler, carried away his prince, laden as he was with irons, on his back. Surviving to the age of eighty-two, this able ruler reigned for a period of fifty-seven years, equally annoyed, it is stated, by his enemies the English, and by *his friends the Welsh*. He fought hand to hand with that hardy baron, Fitzwarren, entrusted by Henry I. with the care of the marches, and finally wrested from him his castle of Whittington. Accomplished as brave, he improved the national minstrelsy, introducing from Ireland, then the 'land of harps,' some of the fine old melodies, abler performers, and a better order of instruments. He further regulated the great family pedigrees,—no trivial task,—and fixed the various heraldic distinctions of his illustrious countrymen.

————— 'Sus horridus, atraque Tigris  
Squamosusque Draco, et fulvâ cervice Leœna.'

But what redounds less to his credit, he is said to have been the first to promulgate the system of the British game laws. The founder also of the House of Gwyder, among his descendants, he ranks Sir John Wynn, the historian, whose account of his journey to court contains many curious particulars of the times. In his dealings with the church, and even with his own countrymen, Sir John was considered too close and shrewd a bargainer, and a tradition is yet current, that the sprite of the old gentleman does penance under the great water-fall of *Rhaiader y Wennol*—there to be purged and spouted upon till purified from all his overreaching acts—'foul deeds done in his days of nature.'

————— 'Aliis sub gurgite vasto  
Infectum eluitur scelus.'

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DEATH OF LLEWELLYN.

Ye that o'er Menai's darkened wave impend ;  
Majestic battlements ! Thou tower sublime,  
From whose broad brows the slender turret springs,  
Light as the plumage from the warrior's helm,  
The pensive bard, of Edward's martial fame  
Regardless, from your splendid ruin turns  
Aside to mourn o'er sad Llewellyn's fate.

*Sotheby's Tour.*

HISTORY has recorded few events more replete with pathetic interest than the fate of the last of the Llewellyns, justly entitled 'the Great : ' for at the moment he fell, a victim to treachery, he left his country in battle array upon the sides of her majestic Snowdon, and her fall as rapidly followed upon his own. When we track his bold and able movements, in the various campaigns against a powerful and overwhelming enemy, as they are described by the old historians, and while we gaze on the spot where he closed his sad and chequered career, we feel as much admiration of his genius and patriotism, as sorrow for his untimely doom. With eager curiosity we examine the route he is described to have taken in his last daring expedition into South Wales, while Edward lay encamped on the plains of Snowdon, eluding the vigilance of his wary foe, and still holding the strong passes, the fortified positions, and once magnificent castle of the King of Mountains. Step by step we trace the line of march, pointed out by the Welsh chroniclers of this last and most arduous of all his exploits, by which he made himself master—with a view of reinforcing his army—of great part of South Wales. As in most of his actions with the English, ability, decision,

and rapidity of movement are the prominent features of that fatal, yet memorable effort to break the bonds of his unhappy country. And strenuously as his royal predecessors had asserted her independence, and the faith and right of treaties, when that independence was lost,—no one seems to have combined so many noble and amiable qualities with so much martial skill and energy, or to have been equally admired and beloved. His influence enabled him to unite the most factious princes and nobles in one common cause; his wisdom directed their counsels, and opened the way with his sword to renewed and simultaneous exertions, which ceased only with his life.

A series of brilliant actions during the minority of Edward I, whom he had thus early foiled in the field, gave rise, it is said, to a personal animosity in that prince, to be appeased only by the downfall of Llewellyn and his people.

The humiliations suffered by Edward when a prisoner with his royal father in the hands of the haughty Leicester, who entered into close alliance with the Welsh prince, and bore his captives as state pageants along with him, must, doubtless, have embittered his feelings when King of England. It could not be more strongly shewn than by the manner of his taking advantage of the long romantic passion entertained by Llewellyn for Eleanora de Montford, to whom he had been affianced in her childhood, as an additional bond of union between the Earl and himself. She even then gave promise of the rare beauty and superior accomplishments, both of mind and person, for which she was subsequently so distinguished, and which changed the policy of the prince into the impassioned tenderness of an ardent lover. Nor, though so early formed, does the attachment seem to have been only on Llewellyn's side; young as she was, the impression made on her tender years, by the amiable qualities of the prince, was not such as either time or distance could efface. The league was broken up; her father had in turn been vanquished—had died; and her lover was no longer the successful champion of his country, nor master of his own dominions. The

banners of England waved over almost every city and fortress where Llewellyn had held undisputed sway; the sword of Edward had deprived him of all but the wild barren region of Snowdon, the last refuge and hope of the brave. A powerful king was his deadly enemy; the church had fulminated its heaviest maledictions upon his head; his brother had become an English peer, and bore arms against him; while his suffering countrymen, groaning under the heaviest oppression, looked with imploring eyes to him alone for succour. Power, splendour, and authority had departed from him; a triumphant king and a subservient church would readily have relieved the lovely countess from her early vows; but, in his extremity, her woman's heart was still true to the vanquished and fallen prince.

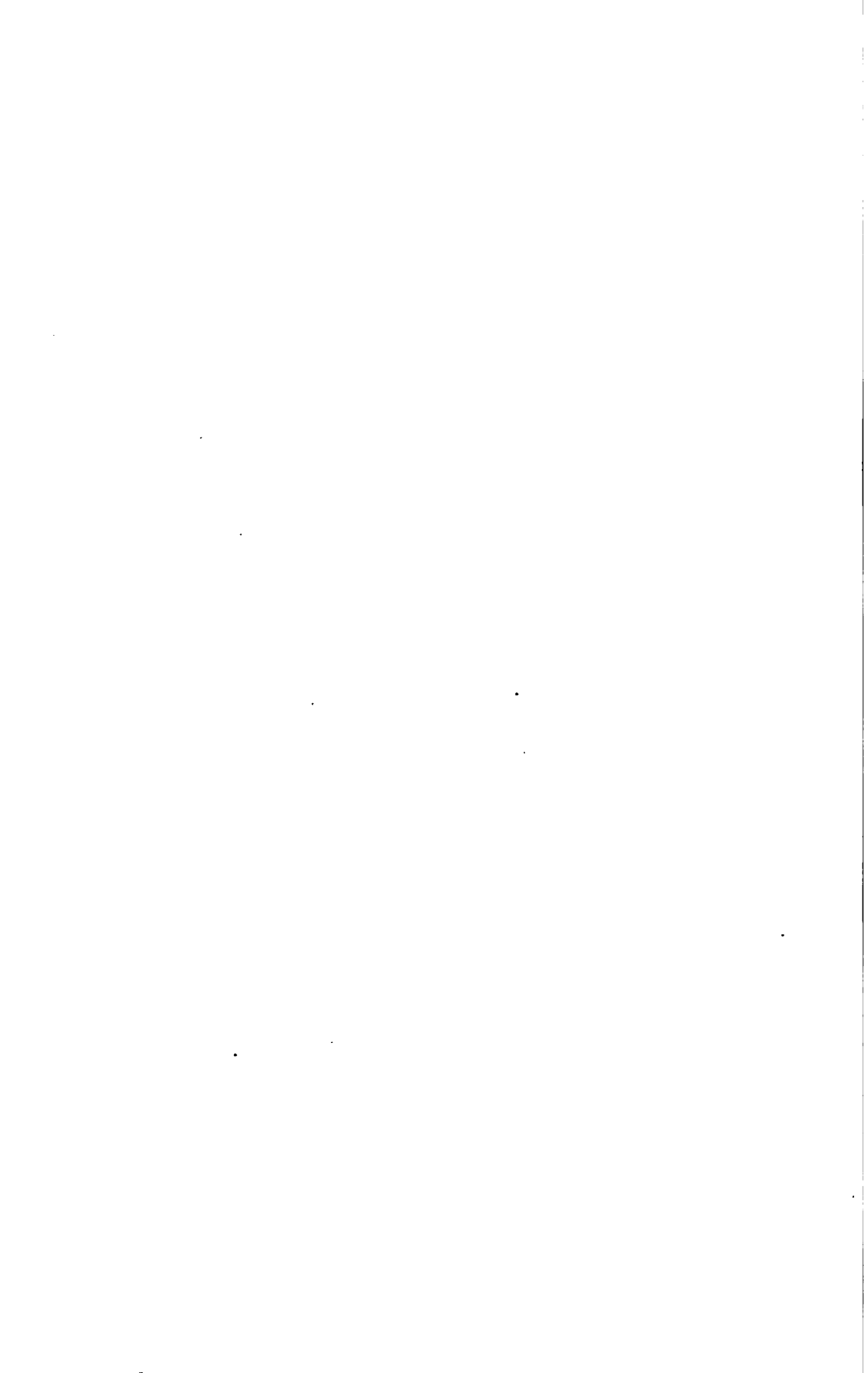
She had retired to France where she completed her education, and subsequently became the pride and ornament of courts,—splendid offers of the high-born and the powerful were laid at her feet; she was tempted even by crowned heads to forsake Llewellyn, for she was niece to Henry III, and first cousin to the martial Edward: but she still remembered and loved him—loved him, perhaps, more deeply because he was the unhappy object of a mighty king's and a great nation's unforgiving wrath. The memory of the hours she had spent in that beautiful land, with her father and noble lover at her side,—of the splendid Aber,\* and the wild secluded scenes midst which her young imagination had first reflected the image of that love she was told to cherish—still, perhaps, haunted her in the festive throng and liveried court, and whispered her how much more beautiful and noble, how joyful and reviving to the bosom of him, abandoned almost by hope, would it be for her, in all this faithlessness of fortune, to be 'still faithful found.'

One beam of light then still shone on the path of Llewellyn, as he yet held his enemy at bay in the mountain fortress of his little king-

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\* The Palace of Aber, in Caernarvon, the favourite residence of Llewellyn in times of war as well as in peace.





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THE GREAT HALL OF THE GREAT HALL

1874

in the Great Hall



dom. The adherents of the House of Montford were still powerful; and the fame of the English monarch had made him the object of jealousy with the French king. The prince now demanded the daughter of the late Earl of Leicester from the French court. Philip granted his request, and Llewellyn waited in impatient expectation for his bride.

Early in 1276, attended by her brother, a clergyman, she set sail for the coast of Wales; but had the misfortune to be captured by four ships from Bristol, and was conveyed to the English court. Here she was detained in honourable attendance upon the Queen, her brother being imprisoned during many years, and released only on condition of leaving the kingdom for ever.

The feelings of Llewellyn may be easily imagined; he was soon in arms, descending from his mountains, and spreading terror and devastation through the English borders. He subsequently offered a large sum for the ransom of his bride; but arms and negotiation alike failed to move the stern purpose of the English king. As vainly the latter summoned the prince to appear, as his vassal, at the court; till, exasperated by his refusal, Edward bore down upon the devoted country with the whole strength of his military talents and resources, both of which were great. Retreating to his mountain fastnesses, Llewellyn was surrounded on all sides, his communications were cut off, he beheld his countrymen perishing by famine; and, after many fruitless efforts, was compelled to throw himself upon the mercy of the enemy. The most harsh and humiliating terms were exacted; among the rest, that he should attend the conqueror to London, there to do homage before the assembled nobles and prelates of the land.

At the English court he again beheld the lady of his early choice, nor did she desert him even now, when the object of secret pity or contempt to other eyes. Perhaps the consciousness of possessing the love of one so truly noble enabled him to endure his sufferings with greater equanimity, and to make those concessions which no other power could have wrung from him. Before the celebration of

his marriage, he was compelled to enter into a contract to appear twice every year before the English Parliament. Edward then restored the hostages he had received, and the estates belonging to the deceased earl. As a further mark of his Royal favour, the nuptials were to be graced by the presence of the King and Queen. Yet, on the day Llewellyn was to receive the hand of a niece of Henry III, Edward ungenerously stopt the procession as they were going to mass, and required Llewellyn to enter into a covenant, never to protect any person whatsoever contrary to *his* pleasure. Being wholly in the king's power, and equally impelled by love and policy, he affected to submit, aware at the same time that to repel such an insult would only tend to accelerate the ruin of himself and his country. In so arbitrary an act, enforced at such a moment, we are at a loss to discover any traces of that heroic gallantry, or those courtesies towards a fallen foe, which marked the cultivated period of European chivalry. Edward's insatiable ambition, perhaps,—even under the guise of lenity,—was only more securely smoothing the way to the complete possession of the principality: by the severity of his government, he subsequently drove the Welsh to desperation, and, after violating every clause of the compact, accused their prince of having broken the engagements he had signed, ever the tyrant's plea for annexing another realm to his crown.

Nor was the position of the princes and nobles, who had attended Llewellyn to the English court, more enviable than his own. The Barons of Snowdon, having done homage before Edward on Christmas-day, were quartered, with large retinues, at Islington and the adjacent villages. We are told they liked neither the wine nor the ale of London, and sufficient milk could not be procured for so numerous a train; though plentifully entertained, they were much displeased with the new manner of living, so little suited to their usual habits. They held the English bread in contempt; and their pride was greatly hurt by the perpetual staring of the Londoners, who came to see them, following in crowds to gaze at their uncom-

mon garb, as if they had been barbarians from some newly-discovered land. 'No,' cried the indignant Britons, 'never again will we visit Islington; we will die in our country as freemen rather than come, as England's vassals, to be the sport of a haughty vindictive master.'

Llewellyn almost immediately after his marriage retired into Wales, where the amiable and excellent qualities of his consort—which had done so much to soothe the irritated feelings of both parties—prevented, for a season, any fresh manifestation of asperity. An interval of repose, in fact, which lasted two years, followed their return; when the early death of the lovely and faithful Eleanora seemed to snap the only tie which held both the princes and the people in temporary amity.\* The grief of Llewellyn, and the lament of his favourite bards, on this occasion, are touching in the extreme; and brief as was her abode with Llewellyn and his people, her memory was embalmed in their tears.

It was now evidently Edward's design to annex Wales to the English crown. Among other cherished traditions of the Welsh was the favourite prophecy of the re-appearance of the celebrated Arthur, destined to restore the empire of the ancient Britons. To remove a national impression so inimical to his views, Edward, with his queen, undertook a journey to Glastonbury, where the remains of that venerated hero lay inhumed.

Under the pretext of doing honour to the British king, by a new and more magnificent interment, he ordered the body to be taken out of its coffin, with that of Gweniver his queen, and to be exhibited to public view. They were then deposited near the high altar, with an inscription on the coffin announcing, that these were the bones of the deceased Arthur; that they had been viewed by the King and Queen of England, in presence of the Earl of Savoy, the Bishop of Norwich, and many others of the nobility and clergy.

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\* Welsh Chronicle, p. 348.—Eleanora de Montford died in giving birth to a daughter, in the year 1280.

The discontent excited by the nobles, who had attended Llewellyn into England, was increased by the stern relentless policy of Edward, and his determination to alter the institutions and customs of the country. His conduct towards their prince was of the same oppressive character. Suits at law instituted both against him and his brother David, were uniformly decided in favour of the English claimants, and they were repeatedly summoned to appear in person, at different places, in order to receive judgment. But since the death of his consort, the Welsh prince had refused to attend the personal summons of King Edward, and the following remarkable occurrence is probably connected with one or other of these vexatious proceedings, so deeply wounding to the feelings of a descendant of an ancient line of kings. Edward being at Aust Ferry on the Severn, and knowing that the Prince of Wales was on the opposite side, sent him an invitation to come over the river, that they might confer on some matters in dispute. This being declined by Llewellyn, Edward procured a boat and crossed over to the Welsh Prince, who, struck with the apparent nobleness of the action, threw himself into the water to receive him, telling the king at the same time that his humility had conquered his pride, and his wisdom triumphed over his folly.

In the year 1281, the spirit of general resistance to the English laws received a powerful accession in the Prince's brother, David, who privately withdrew from the English court. He opened the campaign by the storming of Hawarden Castle; after which the two brothers, uniting their forces, invested the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan. From their hills and vallies the Welsh rushed to join their countrymen; and, north and south, the country rose once more in arms. Fortress after fortress fell before the storm of national vengeance and despair; until at length it burst upon the English borders, ravaging the marches from end to end.

The King of England meantime was keeping his Easter at Devizes; on being acquainted with the extent of the evil, he rose up, and, in the vehemence of his passion, swore that nothing

less than the entire subjugation of Llewellyn and his country should henceforth satisfy him. He wrote to the two archbishops requiring them to fulminate the most terrible denunciations of the church against the Welsh prince and all his adherents.

Nor was Edward supported only by the temporal and spiritual power of England. Gaston de Bern, and many foreign auxiliaries, were eager for the honour of serving in the Welsh expedition, like Cossacks scenting blood in the rear of some Russian autocrat. Of the sense entertained of the difficulties and duration of such a war, we have ample proof in the removal of the Barons of the Exchequer and the Judges of the King's Bench, who repaired to hold their courts at Shrewsbury.

In April 1282, Edward began his march towards Chester; he encamped upon Saltney Marsh; and, about the middle of June, took the Castle of Hope. The Welsh raised the siege of Rhuddlan, retreating slowly on his approach. So well had Llewellyn taken his measures, that the enemy, powerful as he was, made no progress till the close of the year. The Archbishop of Canterbury then came into Wales, and interposing his good offices intreated Llewellyn in frequent interviews to offer an unconditional surrender. The prince in reply made a public declaration, that as the 'guardian of his people's safety, his conscience alone should direct his submission; nor would he consent to any compliance which might derogate from the dignity of his station.' On this memorable answer being reported to Edward, he reiterated his resolution to compel the prince and his people to submit without any conditions whatsoever.

Meanwhile the Prince continued at his palace of Aber, with his army stationed on the heights of Penmaen Mawr, the strongest fortification of the entire Snowdon region, with a fortress capable of containing twenty thousand men.

The spirit of a free constitution, and an ardour for national liberty, breathes in every line of the pathetic memorials of the Welsh princes; nor can we behold, without admiration, a small and

scattered people thus manfully asserting their rights from their last mountain barriers, in the face of an overpowering enemy.

On the first of November, 1282, Edward left Rhuddlan and advanced to Conwy, where he took up strong positions; his horse being encamped on the plains at the foot of Snowdon; his infantry on the sides of the hills, under cover of the woods. Anglesea soon fell, and Edward prepared to pass the Menai to gain possession of the enemy's rear.

Opposite Bangor is a point of land called Moel y Donne, from which the English made a bridge of boats, wide enough for sixty men to march abreast: the Welsh, on their side, threw up intrenchments to secure the passes. Before the bridge was quite complete, a party of the English, attended by the Gascon lords and a body of Spanish troops, passed at low water without opposition. They were suffered to advance; but, as soon as the river had risen, the nearest body of the Welsh rushed from their position, and routed the English with great slaughter. Fifteen knights and one thousand soldiers were thus slain or perished in the Menai. The winter now approached, and Edward's situation was becoming critical; the Welsh were still masters of the defiles, animated by success, and relying still more on the old prophecy of Merlin, that Llewellyn should one day wield the sceptre of the founder of their empire. It is recorded that the prince himself consulted a reputed prophetess, who advised him to pursue the enterprize, for that in the end he would 'ride through Cheapside with a crown upon his head.' Edward being constrained to retire to the Castle of Rhuddlan, the Welsh were eager to become the aggressors; but their leader, not conceiving himself sufficiently strong to assume the offensive, meditated the hardy design of recruiting his army by carrying the war into the south. Leaving his brother in possession of the Snowdonian camp and passes, by a night march he eluded the enemy—reached the south—overran the territories of Cardigan and Strath Towi, and arrived by rapid movements in the Cantreo of Buelt, where he had agreed to hold

a conference with certain lords of the marches. He had in so far accomplished his object; he had nothing to fear from the southern quarter, but was anxious to secure the only pass into the country by which danger might arise from the north. Having posted, therefore, his main army on a mountain, near the Wye, he placed a body of troops at Pont Orewyn, which commanded the passage over that river.\* Thus secured from any fear of surprize, Llewellyn, unarmed and attended only by his squire, proceeded into the valley, where he had agreed to meet the lords with whom he had entered into secret correspondence. There is every reason to conclude that he was betrayed; for the moment after his departure, Sir Edmund Mortimer, with a strong force, attacked the bridge, while Walwyn, a native of the country, pointed out to the enemy a passage through the river a little lower down. Assaulted in front and rear, the Welsh, after a severe contest, abandoned the post, and the English passed over. Llewellyn, meantime, was waiting in a small grove, the place appointed for the interview; but none of the border chiefs appeared, and soon his squire ran towards him, declaring that he heard a great clamour at the bridge. The prince inquired if his troops were in possession of it, and being assured that they were, replied that he need not stir though the whole power of England were on the other side the river.

But in a few minutes the grove was surrounded by the enemy's horse.† In his attempt to escape, he was seen and pursued by Adam de Francton, who, perceiving him to be a Welshman, and ignorant of his quality, plunged his spear into the prince's body, unarmed as he was and incapable of defence.‡ Regardless of his person, the English knight passed on to rejoin his own army, already engaged with the Welsh. They fought with uncommon bravery and obstinacy, though uncheered by the presence of their great leader, who, as he lay mortally wounded without friend or foe

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\* Holinshead.

† Welch Chronicle, p. 374.

‡ Knyghton.

by his side, must have heard the din of the last of his battles—the knell of his country's freedom—as it fell sad and heavily upon his ear. Alone and expiring, he thus continued during three fearful hours, while the contest remained doubtful; and it ended not in the defeat of his countrymen till they left two thousand dead upon the field.

When found, Llewellyn had just life enough remaining to ask for a priest, and a white friar who happened to be present, administered to the dying prince the last sacred rites of his holy office. On viewing the body, it was discovered, to the great joy of the English army, that the dying person was no other than the Prince of Wales. No sooner had he expired than his head was cut off by Adam de Francton, and presented to the King,—who at that time resided in the Abbey of Conway,—as a precious gift. The body lay unburied for some time, though there were numerous solicitations that it might be interred in consecrated ground. The lady Matilda Longespee, among others, interested herself in obtaining this last poor boon. Small as it was, it was not granted till the dead body of the prince had received absolution from the Archbishop of Canterbury, upon the supposition that he had shown signs of penitence during his last moments by asking for a priest.

It may not be uninteresting to add the account preserved by the inhabitants of Buelt to this day, respecting so singular and fatal an event. Llewellyn had posted his army on a hill near Mochryd, a village about three miles below Buelt, on the south side of the Wye. On the north side, two miles further, the prince had a house at Aberedwy, to which he came for the purpose of conferring with some chiefs: during his stay, he was alarmed by the approach of English troops who had secret intelligence of his situation. To extricate himself, the prince caused his horse's shoes to be reversed, as the snow was on the ground; but owing to the treachery of the smith, he was so closely pursued that he had only just time to secure the draw-bridge, at Buelt, in his retreat.

Meantime, the English troops posted at Aberedwy, had informa-

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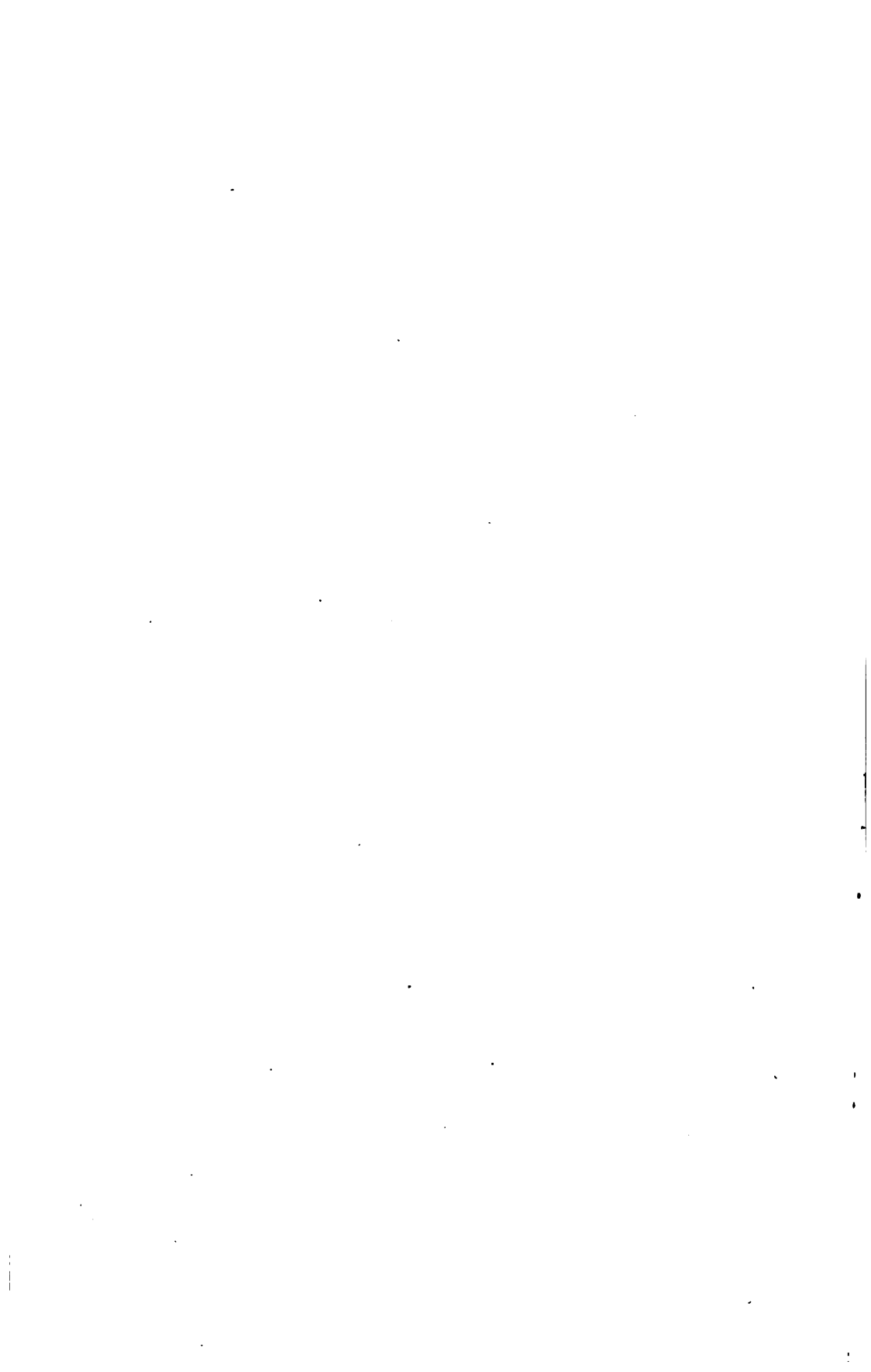
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tion of a ford a little lower down, called *Cefn Twm Bach*, which they crossed, and by that means came between Llewellyn and his army. The only chance of safety now left was to secrete himself. But he was at length found in a narrow dingle, in which he lay concealed, three miles north of Buelt, and about five from his army; the place was afterwards called *Cwm Llewellyn*. They cut off his head, and buried him near the spot; at some subsequent period, a house was erected over his grave, which goes by the name of *Cefn-y-Bedd*, or the top of the grave.

Heroic Prince! when o'er Carnarvon waved  
The crimson flag of conquest, mid the pomp  
Of festal sports—when yon proud castle rung  
To Edward's triumph—thy insulted head,  
Gaze of vile crowds, stood on Augustus' tower,  
With ivy wreath and silver diadem,  
Adorn'd in mockery of Brutus old,  
And Merlin's mystic verse.

*Sotheby.*

The following dirge written by his aged bard, Gryffith, the son of Ynad, is deeply imbued with the grief felt by the people for the loss of the last and greatest of their leaders, and their favorite prince:—

On every wind, o'er hill and glen, come sounds of woe and wailing,—  
As erst on Camlan's plains were heard\*,—of Britain's glory failing,—  
And tears from every eye are poured, free as her mountain springs,  
While Cambria's dying bard thus mourns her lord—her last of kings.  
Llewellyn! oh, the loss of thee, it is the loss of all,—  
Fallen! and horror chills my blood—I see my country fall.  
Break heart, ere thoughts of my loved lord, and of his generous soul,  
To madness goad my burning brain, nor hear his death-knell toll.  
See, the majestic forests bow! with thee all nature bled,  
The ocean heaved his oozy depths, the sun glared strange and red;  
From out their spheres did planets start—to us the day is doom,  
And night, amidst these woods and wilds, enshrouds our living tomb.  
Freedom and song alike expire—'would 'twere the end of all;  
But vainly on a world of crime the wrath of heaven I call.

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\* The spot where the great Arthur was mortally wounded

There is no green spot in the waste, our anguished thoughts to rest ;  
No spot, midst our far mountain-homes, but foemen's foot hath prest.  
Most wretched men, where shall ye flee to lay the wearied head ?  
Where fate—swift fate pursueth not, the sword and famine dread ;  
Proud Edward's wrath—and worse than wrath—the bondage of his will,  
That tramples on your spirits bowed till vengeance hath its fill.†

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† In offering this hasty version from the Welch Chronicle, the author is sensible of having lost much of the power and beauty of the fine old lament ; but he is happy in an occasion of referring all those interested in the subject to an original production contained in a little volume of poems by William Stanley Roscoe. It is entitled '*Llewellyn*.'—(See Blackwood's Magazine for February, 1835.)

### CHAPTER III.

#### CHESTER.

The crooked creekes and pretie brookes  
That are amid the plaine;  
The flowing tydes that spread the land,  
And turne to sea againe;  
The stately woods that like a hoope  
Doe compasse all the vale;  
The princely plots that stand in troope,  
To beautife the dale;  
The rivers that doe daily runne,  
As cleare as christall stone,—  
Shews that most pleasures under sunne  
CARLEON had alone.

*Worthiness of Wales.*

THE Deva of the old Britons, and the Roman ‘City of the Legions’—Chester—abounds in too many interesting associations to be passed over in silence. Justly proud of her ancient loyalty, her high-born families, and the unbroken spirit exhibited in all her vicissitudes, she is still more enviable, perhaps, for the quiet prosperity and dignified ease of these her later days. The extensive sweep of her once formidable and castellated walls proclaims her former greatness; and, at every step, the thoughtful stranger is reminded that he beholds a ‘city of the past.’

Rising boldly above the Dee, its singular construction and angular streets attest its Roman origin;\* while altars, arms, statues,

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\* The old monkish authorities, particularly that of Ranulph, would lead us to infer the contrary, as it is quaintly expressed in the following curious rhymes:—

‘The founder of this city as saith Polycronicon,  
Was *Leon Gawre*, a mighty strong giant,  
Who builded caves and dungeons many a one,  
No goodly building, ne proper, ne pleasant.  
But King *Leir*, a Britain fine and valiant,  
Was founder of Chester by pleasant building  
And was named *Guerlier* by the King.’

coins, and relics of baths, equally prove that it was a grand military station of the conquerors of the world. The name of the twentieth legion, entitled *Victrix*, has been often found inscribed on tiles and votive altars; the Saxon and the Dane left the track of their devastating career, and the Norman conquerors here prepared their expeditions to attack the last mountain-holds of the ancient Briton.

It is recorded that while in the possession of the invading Saxon, the royal Edgar was rowed up the river Dee by eight tributary kings, his majesty of Scotland being one of these rare and unwilling bargemen. And Chester is entitled to our especial regard as the field of early British chivalry—the capital of the good King Arthur and his Knights, once seated in their golden palace at the famed Round Table, enlivened by the ‘merry and wise conceits,’ the comic prophecies and freakish enchantments of the Welsh Merlin.\* How amusingly has the faithful Giraldus† painted ‘the form and body’ of those famed old times, so full of quaint humour, and a succession of wonders which keep fancy and suspense continually on the alert. They are names which tradition has consecrated, and it is hoped that, spite of time and laughter-scaring science, they may still play round the imagination and the heart—familiar to our lips as household words, and continue to delight us in the closet, at the festive game, and on the mimic boards. Honour, patriotism, and generosity,—all those ‘high thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy,’

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\* Many of which would afford admirable materials for the inexhaustible pencil of that unrivalled genius, and exquisite delineator of true British humour—a magician also in his way,—George Cruikshank.

† Giraldus Cambrensis, who gives us the following singular proof of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s want of veracity. In the neighbourhood of Chester, it seems, was a man named Melerius, who, in consequence of having had an intrigue with a young lady on the eve of Palm Sunday, was ever after, more or less, tormented by devils. Though quite illiterate, he could ascertain the true from the false passages in books, because the former drove away, while the latter attracted round him crowds of evil spirits. ‘When Geoffrey’s Chronicle,’ says Giraldus, ‘was brought to him, and he began to read, not only did the demons come perching upon his whole body, but upon every page of the book as fast as he turned it over, in a manner quite unusual with other books.’

which form the mirror of sovereigns, and the idol of a people, and which often rescue monarchy itself from the brand of history,—are ever freshly associated with our ideas of Arthur and of Alfred—recollections more useful and ennobling than may, on first reflection, appear. It is not improbable that the traditional loyalty and devotedness of this ancient city, and its surrounding territory, may have had their origin in some such feelings, in veneration for the greatness of mind and patriotic actions which threw lustre round a few of the true British sovereigns who sat within her walls.

‘Carleon, now step forth with stately style,  
No feeble phrase may serve to set thee forth :  
Thy famous town was spoke of many a myle,  
Thou hast bene great, though now but little worth.  
Thy noble bounds have reached beyond them all ;  
In thee hath bene King Arthur’s golden hall :  
In thee the wise and worthies did repose,  
And through thy vales Uske’s water ebbs and flows.’\*

Nearly all the great and popular qualities which combine to make a prince respected and beloved seem to have met in the character of Arthur. The *Artus fortis et facetus*, as he is so happily described, could have been no unreal personage.† As regards kings, the voice of posterity generally speaks the truth ; and time, instead of magnifying, invariably reduces them to their true proportions. The illustrious ‘few and far between,’ therefore, whose reputation lives and glows through all time, must have possessed commanding genius and rich desert. Among these, the brave, accomplished, and affable Arthur was the ‘*facile princeps*’ of his heroic age, and a character every way congenial with British feelings and tastes.

About the period of Arthur’s birth, in the sixth century, druidism was greatly on the decline. The conquests of the Saxons had extended as far as the Severn and the Humber. His learned con-

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\* A Description of Carleon.

† The writer is pleased in recalling to mind that the late Sir James Mackintosh, in conversing on this subject, took up precisely the same view of Arthur’s real greatness, and he subsequently put his opinion on record.

temporary, the mystic Merlin, soon began to busy himself with the future destiny of a son of the great Uther Pendragon, who had wrested the crown from the usurping Vortigern, but who died before Arthur had reached his seventeenth year. Entrusted by Merlin, who appears to have been prime-conjuror as well as minister of the deceased monarch, to the guardianship of that pink of chivalry—Sir Antour, Arthur's minority soon drew to a close. Already celebrated for his prophecies and his enchantments, Merlin hit upon an ingenious device for securing the young prince's succession to the throne, disputed, as it was, by at least some half dozen fiery headed kings. As a test of royal desert, there is no question that he placed a sword in the cleft of a huge stone, which luckily resisted the power of all other knights to draw it forth, till Arthur succeeded in the trial at the exact moment it was desired; and it has been plausibly conjectured that the place of royal ordeal could be no other than the famous **STONEHENGE**. Success every where attended young Arthur's arms, and being at length unanimously declared dictator by the British chiefs and princes, his coronation took place with great splendour in the golden palace of Carleon, in presence of all the chivalry and beauty of the land.†

Advancing by rapid marches he first fell upon the Saxons, whom

† 'King Arthur sure was crowned there,

It was his royall seate;

And in this towne did sceptre beare,

With pompe and honor greate.

An archbishop that Dubrick hight,

Did crowne this king in deede:

Foure kings before him bore in sight

Foure golden swords we reede.

These kings were famous of renowne

Yet for their homage due,

Repayr'd unto Carleon towne

As I rehearse to you.

How many Dukes and Earls with all,

Good authors can you tell,

And so true writers shew you shall,

How Arthur there did dwell.

he defeated in twelve pitched battles, and crowned his military reputation by the great victory of Badden Hill. With his good sword, Escalborne—made either at Birmingham or Glastonbury—he slew upwards of six hundred of the enemy; and that he fought in the character of a true christian knight, his device of a cross—some say an image of the virgin—seems to afford sufficient proof; for we are not of those antiquarians who love to maintain that King Arthur was any votary of druidism. His triumphs over the Picts and Scots were equally rapid and decisive; like the Saxons, they sued for peace, which being concluded, the youthful conqueror is stated to have relaxed some time from the cares of war and state. He visited the old hunting seats at Caerwys and Nannerch, in Flintshire, where he indulged in the pleasures of the chase; and, if we are to credit some of the old Welsh tales and chronicles, in some other adventures, to promote which the magical services of his friend Merlin were employed in a less laudable manner than usual. It was, perhaps, fortunate then for the fame of both, that ‘the king dreamed a dream,’ not very pleasing to a handsome young prince, ‘that his hair fell from his head, his fingers from his hands, and his toes from his feet.’ Having sought for an interpretation, he was told that his dominion was falling from him, and could be preserved only by means of a lion in steel, the intreaty of a blossom, and the advice of an old man. In this last character Merlin met him disguised as a pedlar, gave him some good advice, and reproached him for his avarice in cheapening down his wares. By the first metaphor he was summoned to the field, and the second was thought to allude to his choice between the conflicting parties of druids and christians.

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‘ What court he kept, what acts he did,  
 What conquest he obtayn’d;  
 And in what princely honor still,  
 King Arthur long remayn’d.’

*Description of Carleon.*

It is further recorded, that having lost his way in the chase, Arthur went to take shelter in a large cave, and on entering beheld three gigantic beings, in the shapes of a frightful old witch, her son, and her daughter. The amiable mother and her boy expressed a great desire to put the truant monarch to death, but the daughter entreated that he might be respited, at least till the next morning. If he should then be able to solve a triad of hard truths he was to be spared. The son, it seems, was an excellent harper, and played the king to sleep, and afterwards covered him with a large ox-hide, so heavy as to imprison him till day break. He then propounded a few knotty points:—‘What am I?’ ‘You,’ replied Arthur, ‘are the best harper I ever heard.’ ‘True,’ said the old woman. ‘And I?’ ‘You,’ replied he, ‘are the ugliest old hag I ever saw.’ ‘True again,’ was her reply, ‘and what more?’ ‘If I were once out of this place,’ returned Arthur, ‘I would never come near it again.’ ‘That is right,’ said the old hag, having too little tact at modern diplomacy to find an excuse for eating him; ‘and now get you gone.’ In this tradition we are learnedly assured that the three druidical deities are personified; Ceridwen, the prototype of witches; her son Abagddu; and the Fleur, or the lovely Blanche-fleur; while the ox-hide betokens the initiation into the religious mysteries of the old Britons. But from Arthur’s aversion to the old woman we are to infer, it is said, his abhorrence of druidism and it would appear from the romance of the Sangreal, that the banks of the Menai witnessed several sharp conflicts between Arthur and the followers of the priests. Not the least of his christian exploits was the restoring of the sacred vial of the true blood, with which the cunning Merlin had sailed off to Bardsey Isle,\* to the possession of the holy church, when it was consecrated by good St. David.

Again he advanced against the Picts, routed them in three engagements, and pursued them into the heart of Loch Lomond,

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\* Anglesea.

there dictating his terms alike to the barbarians and to the rebellious druids. Nor was he less irresistible in his northern expeditions and in Gaul, on his return from which he held several splendid tournaments, and a solemn festival in honour of the coronation of the beautiful Guenever. But we are not told that, on this occasion, Merlin had the honesty to forewarn him that he was crowning the future *chere amie* of good Sir Launcelot of the Lake, and the betrayer of his life and honour. At the same time he held a court of the Round Table, in which he improved the institution set on foot by his father, and while thus engaged, he received a summons from the Romans to pay the old British tribute. To this Arthur replied by preparing a new expedition; and, joining the Gauls, advanced in triumph as far as Langres. The period of time he devoted to this bold campaign, though involved in some degree of obscurity, is admitted to have proved fatal alike to his crown and to his life. While in the heat of battle he received tidings of the treason of his nephew, Mordred, who, not content with abusing the power reposed in him, inflicted a wound upon his private honour; and dreading his just vengeance, united his forces with the Saxons to oppose his uncle's return. The two armies met on the famous plains of Camlan, the struggle was long and doubtful; Arthur slew the traitor with his own hand, but was himself mortally wounded and conveyed to the Abbey of Glastonbury, where in three days he died.

Commemorated no less by Taliessin and the most famous of the old bards, than in the strains of modern poets, the actions of this wonderful prince stand forth in bold relief without any attempt at exaggerated praise. The scourge of the Saxons, he left, after the battle of Camlan, no equal in the council or in the field to mitigate the grief of the Britons for his early fall. Nor is the celebrity of his singular companion—the ‘learned clerk Merlin’—less the boast of his contemporaries and of his nation, in its way. His prophetic dexterity in turning the tables upon the Justice, by shewing him that he was ignorant even as to who was his

own father, is too amusing to be easily forgotten. His vexation at finding that the parson, and not the great lord, was his sire;—the horror of the former, who runs and drowns himself in the river, and the remorse of the lady, who retires to a nunnery, are told with admirable naïveté. His manner of ingratiating himself with the messengers of Vortigern, sent to slay him; his assurance that the king's wise men were no better than fools, and his journeying with them to court,—‘Master Merlin prophesying to them’ all the way, riding upon a little palfrey, are not less worthy the attention of grave historians, as illustrative of the times, than the continual sacking of towns and villages.

In the course of their progress to court, Merlin points to a young man eagerly bargaining for a pair of shoes, and bursts into a loud laugh, observing

‘He weeneth to live hem to wear,  
But by my soul I dare well swear  
His wretched life he shall fore-let,\*  
Ere he come to his own gate.’

He is still more amused at the sight of a funeral procession, in which a jolly young priest sings most loud and melodiously, while the grief of the old man, for the death of his supposed son, knows no bounds. Merlin declares that the chanter and the mourner ought to *exchange characters*. On their arrival at court, Vortigern, being convinced of his divining powers, required him to clear up the mystery of the nightly fall of the foundations of a new fortress, which puzzled all the wise men in his kingdom. Merlin looked very grave, as he knew the explanation would prove unpalatable to the ear of majesty. It was, in fact, a very serious affair, for immediately below the soil, he assured them, were two deep pools, below the water two deep stones, and below the stones two enormous serpents. One of these was white as milk, the other red as fire; they slept during the day, but fought every night, and in their struggle produced the earthquake, which levelled the incipient

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\* Lose

castle with the dust. On exploring the spot there appeared, indeed, the dragon-monsters couched in their subterranean lair,

‘ With long tails many a fold,  
And found right as Merlin told.’

The ensuing conflict was terrible to witness, and ended in the destruction of the red dragon,

‘ That never of him was founden shred,  
But dust upon the ground he lay.’

The victorious white forthwith disappeared, and Merlin, being confronted with the wise men, fiercely asked how they had dared to thirst for *his* blood? Quite humble and conscience-stricken, they pretended that the heavenly signs had deceived them; but Merlin, enjoying their humiliation, shewed that the characters which they had seen were written there by his wicked father, who sought his destruction. Merlin, however, pardoned them—was made the king’s chief counsellor, and the fortress was speedily finished. But the red dragon was typical of Vortigern’s fate, the white of the triumph of Aurelius and Uther; and so it speedily turned out. Vortigern lost his crown, and, on the victorious Uther’s death, Merlin embraced the cause of Arthur against the rival kings, and by his feats of *diablerie*,\* soon raised him to the dictatorship of Britain.

Happy, it is said, is the monarch who has a conjurer for his minister; and Arthur required all Merlin’s diplomatic genius for the black art, to repel the fierce Saxons, the Irish, and other foes. They cut out plenty of work both for that cunning clerk and his young hero, supported as they were by the old knights of Uther, and all the chivalry of the Round Table. Besides, the arch-magician Morgain and one or two knowing old witches were almost his match at his own

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\* In other words, by his learning and deep policy, which, aided by his pretensions to supernatural powers, gave him a command over men’s minds of more extensive influence than the sword of Arthur itself. There is as little doubt of the title of the Cymbrians, and the old Welch—as a branch of the great Teutonic family—to the honour of originating the British romance, the genuine songs and poetry which characterise the ancient literature of Wales.

weapons, and are known sometimes 'to have beguiled the good clerk Merlin.' He succeeded, however, in reconciling a number of the refractory princes of North Wales and Cornwall, who received the boon of knighthood at the hands of Arthur, and fought under his banners. In one of their conflicts with a vast 'horde of misbelieving Irish giants,' the adherents of the king were in imminent peril of being cut to pieces, when luckily the constable or mayor of London, whose name was Sir Do, apprized by Merlin of their desperate condition, ran in all haste to Algate, where he blew a blast with his horn, which soon brought the aldermen with their numerous wards—at least seven thousand men—to his summons. He made them arm, and marched out in double-quick time to the aid of the hard-prest Britons.

The valour of the aldermen and their lumber-troops speedily turned the scale; and Sir Gowain with fresh alacrity was seen to leap over the heads of twelve assailants, and *carve* down to the chine a great pagan who was in the act of killing his brother. The victorious aldermen having returned to their respective wards, were requested by Sir Gowain, and other knights, to divide the booty among the brave citizens, whose acclamations on this proposal exceeded even their feats of arms. We next hear of this great minister attending his royal master, with only thirty-nine knights, from Breckenhoe to Chester, which was then preparing to resist a tremendous assault of the Irish giant Ryance, at the head of fifteen tributary kings. Upon their arrival, they found Leodegan, lord president, seated with two-hundred and fifty knights in deep council as to the means of repelling the threatened assault upon the capital. Merlin drew up his royal company before the council hall, and marching at their head up to the throne, where Arthur had seated himself, he bade King Ban deliver himself of the loyal address which he had committed to memory before he left Breckenhoe. On his right Arthur was supported by Ban, on his left by King Bohort, while barons and knights hand in hand followed in pairs. Among these were presented in succession Sir Antour, his old tutor,

Sir Ulfín, Sir Bretel, Sir Kay, Sir Lucan, Sir Do, son of the mayor of London, Sir Griffes, Sir Maroc, Sir Drians, of the wild forest, Sir Belias, of Maiden Castle, Sir Amours, the brown, Sir Ancales, the red, Sir Aladan, the crisp, Sir Cleodes, the foundling, Sir Amadan, the orgulous, Sir Oroman, hardy of heart, Sir Bleheris, a godson of King Bohort, and others no less illustrious. Merlin, the bearer of the white rod before the monarch, though last, was not the least of the courtly number.

Arthur and his knights, headed by Merlin with a fiery dragon for his ensign, were soon in the field. Every where in the thick of the *mêlée* the King sought the giant Saphiran, the most skilful and terrible of all royal infidels, who unhorsed every Knight of the Round Table whom he met. He was just on the point of dispatching the Lord President Leodegan, when Arthur flew to his relief; but, astonished for a moment at Saphiran's terrific appearance, he hesitated and almost scrupled to attack him, when Merlin cried out in a tone of reproach—

‘What abidest thou, coward King?

The Paien give anon meeting.’

Maddened at this taunt, the British hero sprang upon the enemy and received Saphiran's spear upon his shield, which, piercing through hide and hauberk, wounded Arthur in the side. But at the same instant his own lance passed clean through the Milesian's body, and

‘Quoth Arthur, thou hethen Cokein,

Wende to the devil Apolin !

The pagen fell dede to ground,

His soul laught\* hell-hounde.’

The preceding is a pretty fair specimen of the exploits which may be performed by a king who fights his own battles, and who has a conjuror for his privy-counsellor and his standard-bearer. But we must bid good night at present to the mirror of princes and

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\* Read caught.







the Welsh mountains are seen to great advantage, with the Broxton hills, the solitary rock of Beeston and its ruins, mingled with a rich variety of landscape.

It was from the Phoenix Tower—the only one now left—that Charles I. beheld the triumph of the Parliament in the battle of Rowton Moor. Considerable remains of the ancient Abbey still exhibit a noble example of the old pointed architecture of the Normans. The Cathedral is another of those splendid monuments of which this once majestic city may justly boast. The noble Chapter House is supposed to have been erected in the days of Earl Randle, so celebrated for his border wars, and nephew to the great Hugh Lupus, whose body was found in a stone coffin wrapped in gilt leather, with a cross on the breast, and with a wolf's head engraved on the stone. The old custom of religious sanctuary was on one occasion of some benefit to the noble earl; finding himself beset in the old Castle of Rhudland by the Welsh,—much like Bishop Hatto in his tower,—he sent a messenger to his constable De Lacy for instant succour. The constable happened to be at the fair, and, assisted by one Ralph Dutton, mustered a large body of all the needy and criminal who had taken shelter in the place. With this motley band he marched boldly towards the castle; and the wild mountaineers, struck with their singular garb and imposing numbers, thought good to sound a retreat.

Among its noble and numerous churches, that of St. John, erected, it is said, by Ethelred, in 689, was the most magnificent. There is a tradition of its founder, that he was directed by a vision to build this grand edifice on the spot which should be marked out to him by the appearance of a white hind.

The Bridge, constructed before the time of the Conquest, is a fine and singular specimen of old architecture. After the invasion, the provost had orders to summon one man from each hide of land in the country to assist in rebuilding the Bridge and the Walls. Contiguous to the bridge are the City Mills, originally built by the famous Lupus, and worked by a current through means

of a large dam raised obliquely across the river Dee. They were held by the Earls of Chester of the royal line, and were granted by Edward the Black Prince to Sir Howel, of Fwyall, for his signal valour and capture of the French King at the battle of Poitiers.

Chester long continued the capital city of Venedotia, or North Wales, and was wrested from the Britons, by Egbert, early in the ninth century. In 895, it suffered from a terrific invasion of the Danes, who, retreating before the victorious Alfred, left it a heap of ruins. It was restored by Ethelfleda, the daughter of that great monarch,—celebrated in a barbarous age for her chastity, her wisdom, and her deeds in arms. Her munificence and piety restored cities, founded abbeys; and, what was then esteemed the crown of all virtues, removed the mouldering bones of departed saints to more eligible spots.\* Assuming the government of the Mercian Earldom, she led her armies to victory; and disdaining the usual titles of lady or queen, she chose to be addressed by the names of ‘Imperial Lord’ and ‘King.’ Her commanding genius became the theme of the bards, and the following lines shew the veneration in which she was held:—

‘Elfreda, terror of mankind,  
Nature, for ever unconfined,  
Stamped thee in woman’s tender frame,  
Though worthy of a hero’s name;—  
Thee—thee alone the muse shall sing,  
Dread Emperor and victorious King!  
E’en Cæsar’s conquests were outdone  
By thee, illustrious amazon.’—R. W.

Among her other works, she built a castle at Sceargate, a second at Briege,—the modern Bridgenorth,—a third at Tamworth, a fourth at Stæfford, and in many other towns of Britain. She captured Brecknock, and took its queen prisoner; she stormed Derby, and, as in the case of Legerceaster, rebuilt more cities

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\* Old Saxon Chronicle.

than she stormed. After a life of patriotic heroism and toil, she closed her career at Tamworth, lamented by the people, and still more by her royal brother Edward, whose councils she had directed and whose battles she had fought.

The Norman Earldom of Chester continued upwards of a century and a half; but on the death of John Scott, the seventh Earl, in 1237, Henry III. annexed it to the crown, 'unwilling, as he observed, that so great an inheritance should be parcelled out among distaffs,'—there being no surviving sons. In this act originated the present government of Chester, under its mayor and sheriffs, and the various privileges of its ancient Guild.

Under the sway of the Saxons, Chester was distinguished for its extensive traffic, especially in the barbarous sale of slaves. 'It was a most moving sight to see, in the public markets, rows of young people of both sexes, of great beauty and in the flower of their youth, tied together with ropes, daily prostituted—daily sold. Execrable fact! wretched disgrace!'

During the Heptarchy the Mercian princes held their courts at Chester; it became a province in the time of Egbert, and a seaport of first-rate importance.

Under the feudal sway of the polished Normans, it continued to increase in dignity and splendour, and we are informed by one of those joyous monks,† so admirably depicted by Scott, that 'greate shipes doe come from Gascoigne, Spain, Ireland, and Germany, who by God's assistance, and the labour and conduct of mariners repair hither, and supply all sorts of commodities, so that being comforted by the favour of God in all things, we drink wine plentifully,—for those countries have abundance of vineyards.'

Henry II. in one of his many invasions of Wales, fixed on Chester to hold an interview with Malcolm, King of Scotland, when he obtained the cession of three great northern counties, which had till

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\* Pennant. Tour in North Wales.—*Life of Saint Wulfstan*.

† Lucian, who flourished (says Mr. Pennant) about the period of the Conquest.

then belonged to Scotland. In 1188, Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, passed through Chester, accompanied by the historian Giraldus, on his way from preaching the crusade to the Welsh; and in 1255, Llewellyn the Great carried fire and sword to its very gates, in his wars with the lord-marchers; and, at length, in 1275, the conquering Edward having here required that prince's submission, commenced his last fatal war against the country.

Still the theatre of great events, in 1399 Henry IV. seized upon the city and castle on his way to Flint, hastening to dethrone his ill-fated sovereign; while, in the fierce wars of Glendower, Chester became the rallying point of the royal cause.

Nor was it less conspicuous in the civil strife of the Roses, as we are informed by Drayton, in his touching description of the results of that fatal conflict on the social condition of the country. Lord Audley then held the command of the Cheshire forces in favour of 'the meek usurper,' and he tells us that this general,

'So laboured 'till that he had brought  
That th' half of one house 'gainst the other fought;  
So that two men, arising from one bed,  
Falling to talk from one another fly;  
This wears a white rose, and that wears a red,  
And this a York,—that Lancaster doth cry:  
He wished to see that Audley had well sped,  
He prays again to prosper Salisbury;  
And, for their farewell, when their leaves they take  
They their sharp swords at one another shake.'\*

In the eventful contest of Charles with the Parliament, Chester embraced the royal cause, and stood many a memorable siege. After the King's flight, Lord Byron held the city with unexampled valour and determination, and yielded only on the most honourable terms. Few royalists were so well able to cope with a Brereton and a Mytton as this gallant nobleman, and his opponents bore honourable testimony to his signal bravery and merit.

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\* The Miseries of Queen Margaret.

## CHAPTER IV.

HAWARDEN, EULOE, AND FLINT.

Then as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,  
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,  
Which his aspiring rider seemed to know,  
With slow but stately pace, kept on his course,  
While all tongues cried—'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'

*Richard II.*

HAVING bidden farewell to Chester, the Wanderer, at the break of dawn, pursued his pleasant rambles along the banks of the restless Dee; then crossing its ever-varying tide at the lower ferry, where the elf and wizard-land first breaks upon the eye, he soon beheld Hawarden, with its wild wooded hills and glens, its abrupt and broken rocks and frowning ruins. It was a lovely morning, in the earliest month of summer; the river gradually assumed a deeper glow, as it reflected the rainbow-tints of the sunny dawn, while a soft, still haze hung over its banks far along the spreading Saltney, tinging every object with a dewy light, till it melted in the hilly distance. He beheld not, indeed, the sterner and more majestic features of Alpine scenery—none of the varied brilliancy, the deep purple glow, and rich green hues of the south; but there was a gentleness and loveliness in the hour and the scene,—a charm in the deep peace and solitude of that morning, which left an indelible impression on his memory. It was the more vivid, perhaps, from its having been one of the earliest of his rambles when he explored the castles of North Wales,—then filled with the buoyant hopes, and now with the vanished dreams, of youth. He felt a strange delight in recalling the visions of those days, as he pursued his quiet path along the winding banks of the Dee,—his thoughts still dwelling upon that ancient city with whose strange fortunes northern Cambria, espe-

cially Flintshire, the ground he then trod, were so intimately mixed up. Another footpath over the gently rising meadows and intervening acclivities brought him, in about an hour, within view of the solitary glens and mouldering walls of Hawarden. Far around him lay a picturesque variety of grove, and hill, and dale, with the lofty hills gradually breaking on the horizon, over which the light fleecy clouds had yet hung.

‘ With every mingled charm of hill and dale,  
Mountain and mead ; hoar cliff and forest wide,  
And thine the ruins where rapt genius broods  
In pensive haunts romantic ; rifled towers  
That beetling o’er the rock rear the gray crest  
Embattled, and within the secret glade  
Concealed, the abbey’s ivy-mantled pile.’\*

Such was the scenery of Hawarden, when its spectral ruins and deserted abbey first broke upon his view. He beheld the trophies of man’s vanished conquests,—beauty—power,—the mightiest efforts of successive generations,—fast mingling with the common dust. Before him rose that antique castle, deep-bosomed in trees, lifting its grey walls in bold relief against the clear blue skies. Singularly contrasting with these evidences of sterner times, were seen modern hamlets and mansions adorning the borders of the dreary tract which lies beyond, stretching far towards the town of Mold, till it seems to blend with the distant hills. Near the great road over Saltney, along the Dee, lay Bretton ; on the left the village of Broughton, and its proud manorial halls ; while, commanding all the scene, towered the magnificent ruin, with its secluded

‘ Antique towers,

‘ That crown the watery glade.’

The name of *Pen y Lhoch*, or headland of the lake, with the vicinity of Saltney and other marshes, seem to authorize the conjecture that the walls of Hawarden were once washed by the sea. In Doomsday Book, mention is made of the name of Haordim,—now

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\* A Tour through Parts of Wales.

abbreviated into Harden,—formerly in possession of the Lords of Mold. Part of its fertile lands were granted to the neighbouring Abbey of Basingwerk, and part to the inhabitants of the old domain. As an early British station also of the Cornavii—fiercely held against the Romans, anterior to the heroic defence of the Ordovices,—the Wanderer traced the different fortified heights in the vicinity, evidently the work of the hard-prest Britons. Trueman's Hill of itself supplied him with proofs of the skill and desperate valour of its defendants. It was carried by dint of numbers, and the Norman Conqueror found the fortifications in possession of the Saxon Edwin, with the sovereignty of Deira, extending into the district of Northumberland. Mixed up with the history of Hawarden are found not a few curious anecdotes, of which the following may serve as a specimen. It has long been a tradition that the natives were for centuries past designated by their neighbours, 'Harden Jews,' an appellation originating in the following singular occurrence. During the tenth century, in the reign of Cynan ap Elis, King of North Wales, there was here a Christian temple, and a rood loft in which was placed an image of the Virgin Mary, with a large cross placed in her hands, called Holy-rood. It happened that during a sultry, dry summer, the inhabitants prayed heartily for the blessing of a little rain; and among the rest was the Lady Trowst, wife of the governor of Harden Castle. While engaged in this devout exercise, instead of rain, the Holy-rood fell upon her head, and killed her on the spot. A great commotion ensued; angry at their loss, and no signs of rain appearing, the people, who were rather of a litigious disposition, determined to try the said virgin for the murder. The jury found her guilty—*wilful murder*, in addition to the most ungracious neglect for not answering their petitions—in short, she was sentenced to be hanged. There was, however, a certain man called SPAN, of *Mancot*, who, being one of the jury, proposed an amendment—namely, that she should be drowned instead of hanged, to give her a full taste of that element for which they had so long prayed in vain. But master Corbyn, of the Gate, as eagerly

stickled for an *amendment of the amendment*, to the purport that she should be exposed upon the sands near the river. It was so agreed, and on the influx of the tide the immaculate lady was borne on its bosom to the walls of Carleon, where she was found (being near the Irish sea) *both drowned and dead*. The more pious people of Chester not only interred her, but raised a monument to her memory, on which they inscribed these pertinent and caustic lines—

‘The Jews their God did crucify,  
The Hardner’s their’s did drown,  
Because their wants she’d not supply,  
And lies ’neath this cold stone.’

On this solemn occasion, we are told, the river, previously termed the Uske, was named Rood Die, or Holy-rood; and we should esteem ourselves fortunate could we half as satisfactorily account for the disputed names of all rivers.

Like most other towns of the feudal periods, Hawarden had its origin in the foundation of the castle, which is situated on the north-east side, commanding an extensive view over the river and county of Chester. Dating soon after the Conquest, it came into possession of Roger Fitzvalerine, a son of one of the adventurers who followed the Norman Conqueror. It was subsequently held, on the tenure of Seneschalship, by the family of Monthault of the Earls of Chester, and finally annexed by Henry III. to the crown.

It was at Hawarden that the ambitious Earl of Leicester, after securing the persons of the King and his son Edward, entered into that fatal league with Llewellyn, which compelled Henry to surrender the sovereignty of Wales, with the homage of its baronial suffrage, which were transferred to the Welsh Prince. In the last struggle for independence, it was surprised by David, his brother, on the night of Palm-Sunday, and the entire garrison put to the sword. This prince had acted with equal perfidy towards Edward I., his benefactor, and towards Llewellyn. Having accepted an English barony, and a seat in the House of Peers, he was condemned, like the Duke of Hamilton in later times, to die the death of a traitor, as an English subject.

After the subjection of the country, Hawarden was granted to the House of Salisbury, and subsequently to that of Stanley. From Thomas, Earl of Derby, it descended to his second wife Margaret, Countess of Richmond, and mother of Henry VII. In 1495, that monarch is stated to have honoured the castle with a visit, to enjoy the pleasures of the chase; but his real motive was to ingratiate himself with the Earl her husband, after the ungrateful act of executing his brother Sir William Stanley, to whose assistance he was mainly indebted for his crown. The estates continued in the family till the execution of James, Earl of Derby, in 1651; and, not long after, they were purchased by Sergeant Glynn, from the Commissioners of Sequestration. On the Restoration, the Lords passed an order that the estates, which had been sold under that act without their consent, should be restored.

Aware of what was passing, the learned Sergeant made an early offer of surrender, upon condition only of receiving a lease for three lives. The proposal was rejected with aristocratic folly and angry contempt, the consequence of which was, the deserved loss of the entire property to the Derby family; for, enraged at the noble opposition of the Commons, the Lords sought to accomplish their object by other means.

In the month of December, the same year, they sent down a *private bill* to the Lower House, for restoring to Charles, Earl of Derby, all the manors, lands, &c. &c., which had belonged to his unfortunate father. But this was as boldly opposed by the Commons, and the bill was finally laid aside without ever coming to a second reading. It then became the simple and unlucky Earl's turn to try to compound with the learned lawyer, who, as we are informed, having hold of the right end of the staff, and possessing nine points of the law on his side, obtained with the help of 'his tongue and gown' a grant—not for three lives, but for himself and his heirs for ever.

We need not add that this valuable property has continued in the Glynn family, who can surely never cease to remember that

they had a Sergeant well practised in the law for one of their ancestors.

A few years back, among the old portraits at Hawarden, might be observed two of this distinguished personage, in his character of Lord Chief Justice. Born in 1612, he was educated at Westminster and Oxford, and entered early in life at Lincoln's Inn. He speedily rose with the popular party; was made Steward of Westminster, Recorder of London, and twice returned to Parliament for the city. Next to Pym, he was the most efficient opponent of the despotic Stafford; and on the breaking up of the court party, the fallen peer was heard to remark that Glynn and Maynard treated him like advocates, but Palmer and Whitelock like gentlemen. The author of *Hudibras* alludes to these two great leaders of the popular cause in the following lines:—

‘ Did not the learned Glynne and Maynard  
To make good subjects traitors strain hard ?’

Though appointed Commissioner to treat with the King at the Isle of Wight, he artfully evaded sitting at his trial, while at the same time he became one of Cromwell's Privy Council. In 1648, he had voted against all monarchy; but in 1657 he found that form of government expedient for the settlement of the nation, and strongly urged the Protector to assume the crown. He wrote a treatise on the subject for the Protector's private perusal, but by a master-stroke of policy kept it back, and published it with great éclat on the restoration. This was his ‘*Monarchy asserted to be the best, the most ancient, and legal form of Government;*’ and though written to persuade his former master to mount the empty throne, perfectly reinstated him in the favour of the new court. Charles received him with marked regard; he was made Prime Sergeant, knighted, and pursued his career of honours, which, with his good fortune and ability, seem to have descended as a kind of heir-loom in the family. Such, in short, was his profound political tact and sagacity, as to offer perhaps the most finished example upon record of that popular personage, quaintly termed by John Bunyan,

*Mr. Worldly Wiseman*; and the great Chief Justice almost eclipsed—to use the style of an eminent law authority—the landed-property-sequestration-commission-act-purchasing-learned-sergeant.

It was near Hawarden, at Balderton Bridge, that the Welsh sustained a terrible defeat from Hugh Cyvillian, Earl of Chester, who, by way of trophy, afterwards made a rampart of the heads of those who fell in the conflict.

On the side of Chester the Saltney rises rather abruptly, and from considerable hollows and corresponding elevations on the left, as well as from traces of a bastion, seems to have been the site of old encampments, with a view to command the pass into the country of the Ordovices,—the old positions still pointing towards the districts of Varis, Cornovium and Segontium.

In common with many feudal edifices, Hawarden Castle suffered severely during the civil wars of Charles I. It was surrendered, after a close and determined siege, in 1645, to General Mytton, and the Parliament ordered it to be dismantled. Little more than fragments of the former towers and keep remain; and a considerable portion of the magnificent ruin was itself obscured by heaps of rubbish, till Sir John Glynn had it removed and the foundations laid open to view. It was constructed in a pentagonal form; on one side was a spacious gateway, and on the other a kind of barbican. At one angle was situated the keep or citadel, a circular tower still nearly entire, and which forms one of the most picturesque objects that strike the eye on first approaching ‘its ancient solitary reign.’ Other portions consist of the relics of vast mouldering walls, of massive *donjons*; and, in one part, of a long flight of steps, at the bottom of which was a door and a draw-bridge crossing a ravine to another division of the castle, embracing, most probably, the prison thus fearfully secured.

On all sides it was surrounded by deep chasms and fosses filled with trees; and, from its extensive plan and once broad foundations, it has the appearance of having been erected at different periods—of having been sometimes defaced and at others restored,

according to the vicissitudes and fortune of war. The church has nothing peculiar to attract attention as regards either its architecture or interior decoration; the style of building, like the specimens of sculpture which it contains, being remarkably plain. Peculiar privileges pertained to the rector of this benefice: he held a sort of ecclesiastical court,—could grant matrimonial licences, register wills, give probates, and discharge every act of a suffragan except ordination and confirmation. He can even now preside as a judge, attended by his proctors and consistorial court; and the annual revenues are calculated to amount to above three thousand pounds.

The mansion of Hawarden Park, the seat of the family, is a noble structure, erected by a Sir John Glynn, in 1752. In 1809 it received some magnificent additions, and then assumed the form of a castellated edifice, with antique-looking windows and turrets in the style of the thirteenth century. It possesses a large collection of pictures, consisting chiefly of portraits of the Evangelists, in the manner of Caravaggio, the productions probably of a French artist.

The ascent towards Hawarden from the river Dee, with the village of Broughton, once the property of the Ravenscroft family,—the Saltney, stretching within a mile of Chester,—the stream called the Leeches, flowing on the left,—and Doddleston, form altogether an interesting approach to the principality. At Doddleston is seen the tomb of the honest yet persecuted Chancellor Ellesmere, who chose that place as a residence from affection to his first wife, a daughter of Sir Thomas Ravenscroft, of Beeston. His mother, according to Mr. Pennant, had been a servant in the family of some humble persons in the parish, and the following remarkable anecdote of her, and of her fortunate child, is still current. Being neglected by her seducer, Sir R. Egerton, the father of the future Lord Chancellor, she was reduced to beg for her support. A neighbouring gentleman happened to see her soliciting alms, followed by her little beggar-boy. Struck with his beauty, he accosted him, and thought he discovered in his countenance marks of superior intelligence and gentleness of mind. In the generous

impulse of the moment, he hastened to Sir Richard, and described the disgraceful situation in which he had just beheld his son, wandering from door to door. With manly feeling the father acknowledged the justness of the reproof, received the child, and, by an excellent education, laid the foundation of his celebrity and good fortune.

The last fleecy clouds passed from the horizon before the splendour of a glowing noon, as the Wanderer resumed his quiet walk towards the lonely and wooded retreats of Euloe. Though scarcely a quarter of a mile from the main road, so secluded is the spot that a guide is usually engaged to thread the paths leading to its time-worn and romantic castle. The ruins of a massy tower and broad dilapidated walls, consisting of a sort of horn-work, first present themselves to the eye. At one end of an ancient oblong court, overgrown with weeds and moss, stands the ivy-mantled porch and turrets—lone and neglected as the scene, and forcibly corresponding with the description in Gray's *Elegy*;—the deserted abbey and the modern hamlet, with its rustic church in the distance, giving all the feeling of truth to the touching reflections of the poet. The only sound which breaks upon the silence is the sighing of the wind through the deep ravine below the tower; and on the other side appears the broad, deep moat, where the old draw-bridge once stood.

From the summit of the tower the Wanderer beheld, over thickly wooded vales and glens, a wildly picturesque prospect, which impressed him with an idea of solitude and silence almost as profound as if he had stood amidst the spreading forests and rivers of the new world. It was here, he remembered, that 'Hoele, a true gentleman of Flyntshire, was wont to give the bagge of the silver harpe to the best harper of North Wales, as by immemorial privilege of his auncestors dwelling at Penrin, in Flintshire; and that he hath also a ruinous castelet, or pile, at a place called *Castell Yollo*.\*'

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\* With little difficulty modernized into Euloe.

The low narrow defiles of *Coed Euloe* and the vicinity became memorable by the defeat of Henry II., when commanding in person, during one of his most formidable invasions of Wales. The sons of Owen Gwynedd permitted the enemy to approach along the passes of the country, till they were gradually entangled in the obscurity of the surrounding woods, and narrow glens, and vallies. The onslaught of the Welsh was terrific; their enemies were thrown into confusion, and pursued with slaughter into the heart of the English camp. Enraged at this signal disgrace to the royal arms, Henry advanced with his whole force; but falling into the same difficulties, the assault was renewed, and he had very nearly perished, with the chief of his army, at Coleshill. A number of his leading barons were slain; the bearer of the royal standard,—esteemed the bravest of the brave\*—seized with a strange panic,—flung it from him and fled, crying out that the king was killed! But that wise and valiant monarch was eagerly rallying his forces; and, charging in person, finally repulsed the mountaineers, and withdrew to a more secure station. Proceeding next along the coast to cut off the retreat of Prince Owen, by getting between him and the hills, he was again foiled in his object by that able leader anticipating his movement, and taking up a strong position on a plain near Saint Asaph, still named Owen's retreat, whence he retired to Bryn y Pin, a post protected by immense ramparts and ditches. Traces of his encampment are yet found upon a lofty rock above the church, now called *Pen y Parc*. In the vicinity are two high mounds, the site, it is supposed, of fortresses long since destroyed. One near Gadlys appears to have been the seat of some Welsh prince; the other, about a mile beyond Flint, is called Bryn y Cwn, or the hill of dogs,—very probably an ancient hunting seat. A circumstance occurred subsequently to this Welsh victory, which has been thought to indicate that the report of King Edgar's having, in 1157, extirpated the race of wolves could not be strictly true. A Cambrian gentleman

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\* Henry of Essex.





FLINT CASTLE.

*Proof*





killed in the battle, was found, after a lapse of eight days, attended by his faithful dog, which had during all that time defended his master's body from falling a prey to wolves and birds.

It would seem that there is no tradition extant respecting the foundation of Euloe Castle, its origin having defied the research of even that patriarch of modern tourists, Mr. Pennant. But there is sufficient reason to conclude, that it was built either by one of the lords of Tegangle,\* or by Henry himself, as a strong-hold to protect his troops from future disasters like those already mentioned.

The manor of Euloe was reckoned an appurtenance to that of Montalto or Mold. It belonged to the crown till Henry VIII. granted it to one Peter Stanley, the tyrant's tool and creature; and his successor, Edward Stanley, held it under Elizabeth at the value of twenty pounds a year. In Saxton's Map of Flintshire is a place called Yowly Hall, and in the Salisbury pedigrees are yet to be found the arms of the family of Euloe, but with nothing interesting in an historical point of view. The old castle is situated about two miles from Hawarden, and five from the village of Northop.

Having indulged his curiosity in exploring the relics of feudal power and splendour,—enjoyed the picturesque views, the melancholy charm of this wild, secluded spot,—the Wanderer prepared to revisit the still more memorable Castle of Flint.

The town itself has all the appearance of a fallen and deserted capital, presenting evidences of its former extent and importance in long lines of half dilapidated edifices and broken streets. In its rapid decline it seems to have partaken the fate of its once-towering and lordly fortress. Its loss of influence was accelerated by the removal of the general sessions, and the competition of powerful rivals; and though at the head of one of the ancient shires of North Wales,—being mentioned in Domesday Book before the Conquest,—there seems little promise of its restoration to vanished greatness

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\* Anglicé, fair England,—the ancient name said to have been given to Flintshire.

or civic prosperity. There is reason to believe, that at an early period the town was known also by the name of Colsul, or Coleshill; for Mr. Pennant tells us that he could find no other site for the Chapel of Colsul, granted by David, son of Llewellyn, to the Abbey of Basingwerk. It probably went by both names, and it is ascertained that it was held by Robert of Rhuddlan. From the situation of the place, it has also every appearance of having owed its origin to fierce and perilous times,—its entire structure presenting the aspect of a warlike station to resist the repeated shocks of a people newly subdued. Its primitive foundation was doubtless that of a Roman encampment, the site being rectangular, and having a deep wide fosse, with huge ramparts, besides four great equilateral gates, which can be traced upon the same military foundation.

The Church of Flint is supposed to have been the old *Capella di Colsul* mentioned by Dugdale, and belonging to the Abbey of Basingwerk. It is a perpetual curacy held under Northop, and dedicated to Saint Mary. But the view of the majestic ruins of the mighty and fallen,—the pride of chivalry in its boldest and most splendid day,—absorbs every other in the mind of the passing traveller. Standing in bold relief upon a rock which jutted from the south bank into the sands, this grand feudal monument once looked from its vast battlemented towers, like a sovereign over its subject Dee, of which the restless waves swept its walls, as they now moan and fret round its fast mouldering ruins.\* At the recurrence of each high tide the estuary may literally be said to inhume some fresh remnant of its antique pomp and pride in the great waters of oblivion.

These imposing ruins are seen on the north-east of the town, to which the castle was formerly attached by a bridge, which led to the outwork, or tower called the barbican. It was built in a square, with large round towers at three of the corners, with a fourth a little

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\* Inasmuch that it may now almost be justly averred, both of the old town and its fallen castle, in the words of the Roman, 'Etiam perierunt ruinæ.'

disjoined and still more massy. This last is known by the name of the double tower, and was joined to the main edifice by a draw-bridge. Beneath it is a circular gallery, with four arched openings into a central area more than twenty-two feet in diameter. In one part this gallery slopes towards the interior, and, again ascending, communicates with an upper range still more central, which formed the ancient donjon.\* To this stronghold, we are informed by Froissart, the unfortunate Richard II. retreated, as a place of the greatest security; and here he was subsequently delivered into the hands of Bolingbroke,—an event which, it will be seen, has afforded scope for the genius of an artist familiar with the historical characteristics of ‘olden times.’

The scene between Richard and his haughty kinsman is perhaps one of the most remarkable and pathetic in the range of British history, and throws around these ruined precincts a still sterner air of melancholy interest and truth.

It affords, also, one of the most startling lessons of humanity in the son of England’s favourite hero, and on the very spot in the land where his royal predecessor had appeared a crowned conqueror, at the head of invincible armies—‘the mighty victor, mighty lord,’ triumphant over three powerful nations. What an appalling vicissitude does the poet’s picture of the fallen fortunes of his descendant present to the mind!

‘Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,  
While, proudly riding o’er the azure realm,  
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,  
Youth at the prow and Pleasure at the helm,  
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind’s away,  
That hushed in grim repose expects his evening prey.’

‘Fill high the sparkling bowl;  
The rich repast prepare;†

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\* Pennant.

† Richard II.,—as we are told by Archbishop Scroop, and the confederate Lords in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older writers,—was starved to death. The story of his assassination by Sir Piers of Exon is of much later date.

Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast ;  
Close to the regal chair  
Fell thirst and famine scowl  
A baleful smile upon the baffled guest.'

Although the scene abounds in memorials of great events, we shall give precedence to a brief historic sketch of a circumstance which appeals with peculiar force to individual sympathies, and is rendered more interesting from its having given birth to one of the most beautiful passages in the works of our great dramatist.

On the attainder of Vere, Earl of Oxford, Flint Castle came into possession of the Earl of Northumberland, who had the baseness, under the mask of a peace-maker, to entrap the sovereign whom he professed to serve into the hands of his enemy and aspiring rival. As if anxious to effect a reconciliation between the king and the duke, by means of a personal interview, he appeared before Richard in the character of a loyal mediator, declaring that all his kinsman aimed at was the privilege of holding a free Parliament, and having his estates restored to him. Deceived by his loyal professions, and weakly relying upon the honour of an English peer, he was prevailed upon to give his betrayer a meeting in the neighbourhood of Conway. The better to allay the king's suspicions, which were more than once expressed, he proposed to accompany him to high mass, and renew his oath of allegiance at the altar. The way from the holy temple lay through a lonely defile in the mountain district near Penmaen Rhos ; and here the king was first taught to repent of having placed confidence in the solemn oath of one of the first nobles of his land. They were suddenly joined by a numerous military escort, bearing the arms of the Earls Percy on their standards. Upon the instant, Richard, who was never wanting to himself in moments of emergency, turned his horse's head to fly, but it was too late ; the arch-traitor himself dashing forward, seized the reigns of his charger, and,





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seconded by his partizans, forcibly directed his wretched sovereign's route towards the then broad, frowning towers of Flint.

Bitterly did the royal Richard reproach the dastardly betrayer of his sovereign's trust, accusing him, to his face, of the vilest treachery that ever stained the arms of an English knight, and appealing to the God, in whose presence he had that morning sworn fealty, to visit its blasphemous violation upon his head, declaring a day of retribution would assuredly follow a deed so revolting to every mind. But his betrayer only hurried forward more speedily till he reached Rhuddlan; and, after a brief pause, hastened onward, with the conscious guilt of a retreating bandit, eager to deposit his stolen treasure, ere he could be overtaken, in the impregnable walls of Flint. Having secured the price of royal blood, he added the most despicable hypocrisy to treachery and insult. Both he and his employer affected to treat Richard with the utmost deference and respect. 'The next day after dinner,' says our pleasant old Chronicler,\* 'the Duke of Lancaster entered the castle, armed at all points, his basinet excepted. Kynge Richard came down from the keep, or *donjon*, to meet him, when Bolingbroke fell upon his knees with his cap in his hand. Seeing this act of apparent submission, the kynge tooke off his hoode and spake first, 'Fair cousin of Lancaster you are right welcome home.'—The duke, bending still more courteously, replied, 'My Liege, I am come before you sent for me, the reason why I will shew you. The common fame among your people is such, that ye have for the space of twenty or two and twenty years ruled them very rigorously; but, if it *please* our Lorde, I will help you to govern better.'—Then the kynge answered, 'Fair cousin of Lancaster, since it pleaseth you, it pleaseth me well.'—Stowe also informs us that 'Kynge Richard had a grayhounde called *Mathe*, who always waited upon the kynge, and would knowe no man else; for whensoever the kynge did ryde, he that kepte the grayhounde did

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\* Stowe's Annals, p. 321,

let him lose, and he wolde streyght rune to the kynge, and fawne upon, and leape with his fore-feet upon the kynge's shoulders. And as the kynge and the Earle of Derby talked togyder in the courte, the grayhounde, who was wont to leape upon the kynge, left the kynge, and came to the Earle of Derby, Duke of Lancaster, and made to him the same friendly continuance and chere as he was wont to do to the kynge. The duke, who knew not the grayhounde, demanded of the kynge what the dog would do? 'Cosyn', quod the kynge, 'it is a great good token to you, and an evyll sygne to me.'—'Sir, how know you that?' quod the duke: 'I know it well,' quod the kynge, 'the grayhounde maketh you chere this day as Kynge of Englande, as ye shall be, and I shall be deposed: the grayhounde hath this knowlege naturalye, therefore, take him to you; he will follow you and forsake me.'—The duke understood well those words, and cherished the grayhounde, who wolde never after folowe Kynge Richard, but folowed the Duke of Lancaster.'

Soon, however, this hollow show of respect was thrown aside, and dropping the mask, with a high sharp voice the duke ordered forth the king's horses; and then 'two little naggess, not worth forty franks, were brought out; the king was set on the one, and the Earl of Salisbury on the other; and thus the duke brought the king from Flint to Chester, where he was delivered to the sons of the Duke of Gloucester and of the Earl of Arundel, whose fathers he had recently put to death. They conducted him straight to the prison, and in this 'dolorous castelle,' as it is termed by Hall, was deposed the weak and unfortunate monarch, Richard II.'

It would appear, as in the case so pathetically alluded to in *King Lear*, that even the ingratitude of the brute creation added a sting to the broken spirit of the crownless monarch. Such an incident could not escape the artist, studious of historical character in the old picturesque times; and Richard's favourite dog here appears as if struck with the change in his master's demeanour, and, sensible of his fallen fortunes, eager to fawn upon his rival.

After an interview like the foregoing, the speedy fate of

Richard,—the invariable fortune of a captive and dethroned prince,—calls for no comment. In its most trying circumstances,—such as the heartless parade of his victim through the country in his progress to the capital,—how well does the exquisite description of our immortal dramatist exhibit the startling scene, and all the traces of Bolingbroke's character! With what peculiar felicity he holds to view the noble moral—a fearful lesson to princes!

‘Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,  
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,  
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,—  
With slow, but stately pace, kept on his course,  
While all tongues cried—God save thee, Bolingbroke!  
You would have thought the very windows spake,  
So many greedy looks of young and old  
Through casements darted their desiring eyes  
Upon his visage; and that all the walls,  
With painted imag'ry, had said at once—  
Jesu preserve thee! welcome, Bolingbroke!  
Whilst he, from one side to the other turning,  
Bare-headed, lower than his proud steed's neck,  
Bespake them thus—I thank you, countrymen :  
And this still doing, thus he pass'd along.

*Duch.* Alas, poor Richard! where rides he the while?

*York.* As in a theatre, the eyes of men,  
After a well-grac'd actor leaves the stage,  
Are idly bent on him that enters next,  
Thinking his prattle to be tedious:  
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes  
Did scowl on Richard: no man cried, God save him;  
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:  
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head;  
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,—  
His face still combating with tears and smiles,  
The badges of his grief and patience,—  
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd  
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted,  
And barbarism itself have pitied him.'

In the accompanying plate, the artist has also represented Richard's page attempting, with strong natural delicacy, to repress the dog's efforts to fawn upon the proud usurper.

With regard to the foundation of Flint Castle, antiquarians are to this day undecided. Camden and others, followed by Lord Littelton, assert that it was commenced by Henry II. and completed by the first Edward; while Leland adduces the authority of older writers to attribute it altogether to the latter. After his rout and escape to Euloe, it is probable that Henry erected some fortress on the spot to resist any fresh attacks, and that the more enlarged castellated pile, in its strength and majesty, was the work of his great descendant, the most powerful of English sovereigns. In 1277, an order was issued for proclaiming a market and fair, to be held at Flint—a measure soon after extended throughout Cheshire and the cantreds of Wales. From the tenor of a writ, preserved by Rymer, it would also appear that Edward I. resided in the castle, the same year, about the period of the Feast of the Assumption.

In 1280, the year in which it was garrisoned, another mandate was issued for the custody of the gate of Flint. Three years subsequent the town received its first charter, was made a free borough, and a mayor elected and sworn 'faithfully to maintain its liberties.'

The burgesses also received from Edward a grant of timber, cut out of the woods of Northop and the adjacent lands, in order to smelt their lead ore, and moreover a right of pasturage in the same woods.

Wearied with the oppressions of successive masters, the Welsh at length rose once more, led by Llewellyn and his brother David, and Flint, like Hawarden, was surprized and carried by storm. It was here too, in 1311, that the first English Prince of Wales—Edward of Caernarvon, the son of the Conqueror—received from exile his favourite, Piers Gaveston, who had landed from Ireland, and by his infatuated weakness suffered a fate still more terrible than that inflicted by his father on the last native princes of the country.

In 1355, Edward the Black Prince received orders, as Earl of

Chester, to take into safe custody the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan, which he possessed by charter, in common with that of Chester, and the cantred and lands of Englefield.

In the formidable insurrection of Owen Glendower, that able chieftain, in vain attempted to possess himself of the fortress, from which time a blank occurs in its history, till we reach the period of the Civil Wars. It was then garrisoned for the king by Sir Roger Mostyn, of whom Whitelock makes the following honourable mention :—‘ This Colonel Mostyn is my sister’s son, a gentleman of good parts and metal; of a very ancient family, large possessions, and great interest in the country, so that in twelve hours he raised fifteen hundred for the king.’ In the siege of 1643, he made a desperate defence against the Parliamentary general, Sir W. Brereton, and it was not till every method was exhausted, and every privation suffered, that he yielded, in order to preserve the garrison. The castle appears to have been subsequently recovered by the royalists, as the garrison of Beeston had by articles of convention marched out of that fortress, in 1645, with all the honours of war ‘to join their countrymen in Flint Castle.’ But it was again compelled to yield to General Mytton in 1646, and in the year following was dismantled, with many other fortresses, by order of the Parliament. Its gallant governor was ill-requited for his services by the Crown, for after having expended upwards of sixty thousand pounds, and suffering a long imprisonment in Conway Castle, he was reduced to leave his family seat, and live privately at an ordinary farm house.

At the Restoration the Castle of Flint was resumed by, and is still vested in, the Crown; and, according to the tenor of ancient royal grants, the constable appointed appears in the two-fold character of military and municipal head—being at once Governor of the fortress and Mayor of the borough.

Northop, three miles distant, is considered the mother church to the chapel of Flint, which contains three monuments in the shape of altar-tombs. On each is a recumbent effigy, and one is of con-

siderable antiquity; but the inscriptions are nearly obliterated. The remainder of that decorated with a female figure has round it Llew \* \* \* \* \* anno Domini, 1482. According to tradition, her name was Lleuci Lloyd, a celebrated beauty of that period; perhaps the same so fatally beloved by a favourite bard, who, on returning after a long separation, met with the same shock as the Chevalier de Rance,\* for each of them is said to have found his beloved in a coffin. The bard, after fainting at the sight, and again reviving, sat down and composed a beautiful elegy to the lady's memory. The count is said also to have swooned, but on being restored he retired from the world; and, as a sort of atonement for illicit love, founded the Monastery of La Trappe, so long celebrated for its austere discipline.

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\* Pennant's Tour, vol. i, 115.

## CHAPTER V.

ST. ASAPH, RHUDDLAN, AND THE VICINITY.

Far other thoughts, in inexperienced hours,  
Enchantress! winged me to thy fairy bowers.  
The festive roar was dissonance: my soul  
Sunk at the riot of the maddening bowl.  
With noiseless foot from the tumultuous crew  
To muse in viewless wanderings I withdrew,  
Till, unperceived, the twilight's fading ray,  
Left me lone-lingering on the pathless way.

*Sotheby.*

THERE are moods of mind—the result, perhaps, of too deep experience or long travel, such as dictated some of the wildest and most pathetic poetry of Byron—when the beaten tracks of life, society, friendship, and the yet hollower promises of ambition, seem to lose their every charm. The thoughts of the heart revert, with a sigh of regret, to earlier and more genuine affections,—more unembittered pursuits. We sigh to cast off the worldly mask which custom condemns us to wear—to turn from the empty forms and insincerity which direct the grand movements, and perform the lip-service of the day, and to shelter us in the sanctuary of younger and nobler feelings, when we worshipped the divine effusions of genius as holy truth, and dwelt on the beautiful and bright in nature with the love of a child on its smiling mother's face.

With this irrepressible love, so early rooted—with habits of deep solitary study and contemplation which strongly marked his character and feelings, and with that restlessness which an early unhappy passion and wounded ambition equally produce,—the Wanderer turned from the resorts of the great and the gay with a feeling of scorn and satiety, which seemed to render change of scene almost necessary to his being. He had studied life—as it is idly termed

—under different aspects, and in all its conditions; he had beheld society in its equally vulgar extremes; he had experienced the strange mutabilities of fortune, and he now wandered solitary amidst scenes over which fancy, ennobling love, and youthful companionship, had cast the spell of their brief but glorious reign.

The ruins of the time-dismantled castle of Flint, which threw its broad shadow in the clear moonlight upon the sands, like the reflection of those vanished scenes, assorted well with the traveller's mood, as he resumed his onward path. Within the precincts of those mouldering battlements monarchs had met,—a monarch laid down his crown; they had rung with the storms of battle, and re-echoed with the wildest revelry of feudal victory and pride. A brave people had there surrendered up their ancient freedom at the feet of their last oppressor, little regardless of the blessings which such a conquest had in store for them; and with thoughts strangely speculating on the results of human action, and the great compensatory system of mingled good and evil, the traveller gazed back upon what were once the massive bulwarks of Flint, fast crumbling into dust. He listened to the growing swell of those eternal surges which came sweeping over the sands, when the bulwarks were in their glory, as now they hasten their decay; and the moon shed a fitful light on the bleak prospect and far-spreading shores of the Dee, as he pursued the lonely path along the banks towards the ancient Abbey of Basingwerk. Free as the native mountaineer to select his own time and route, without the breath of another's will, he felt the sense of loneliness lost in the 'strong and far delight' of exploring at pleasure scenes and spots congenial with the prevailing impulses of the hour. It was this feeling which induced him, on reaching his native hills once more,—a sadder but a wiser man,—to throw off all ties and incumbrances of the way, and taking the cross-roads and well-known bye-paths, to resume acquaintance with the immemorial dwellers by the lake and hill-side—friends of the forest, and vale, and glen, with some of whom, humouring their national foible, he often loved to descant

on princely lineage, and the respective merit of their titles to rank with the common or the royal tribes. By this plan he enjoyed the best of all companionship, which he could drop or take up at any moment; gleaned many amusing particulars as to antiquarian games and sports, the old laws of assemblies and festivals, with the more traditional customs and manners of country life, and in return laid down the rules enacted by their first princes in the bardic contests for the prize of song. In his progress from Euloe he thus visited every spot, along the high-ways and bye-ways, which could excite his curiosity, or win him by the study of simple habits and reliance on personal exertion and resources, to free himself from the real servility of irksome dependence upon menials for his least wants and wishes. The advantages he derived were as pleasant as they were unexpected; he experienced the delightful confidence inspired by traversing the less frequented portions of the country at all hours and seasons—he beheld its wild picturesque scenery in its most contrasted lights and shadows—in cloud, in sunshine, or in storm—in the silence and the deepening hues of twilight—the opening splendours of the dawn, and under the solemn sway of night.

In thus diverging from the old prescribed routes and line of roads, the Wanderer, on his way to St. Asaph, became acquainted with a number of interesting objects,—pleasant little hamlets,—the sites of ancient towns, stations, or royal seats—feudal and castellated ruins, which he could not otherwise have explored. The dreary coast-scenes about Kelsterston; the antique Northop, Nannerch, Halkin, Caerwys,—once the theatre of the old British olympics, and the assemblies of the bards, with the surrounding neighbourhood, so full of historic associations;—Baghilt, Basingwerk, with its famed old abbey and castle—ruins on Offa's dyke, Pen y Pylle, Greenfield, Holywell, Whiteford, Downing,—sacred in the eyes of every tourist,—Moyston, with its wild-coast views, all in succession met the Wanderer's eye ere he passed the rocky, broken road from Holywell, and saw opening before him the

delightful vale and river of Clwyd. He had often remarked the assemblage of mild yet picturesque beauties it affords, especially when viewed from the vicinity of Ruthin; but the quiet charm and loveliness of the scene, as he passed the seat of Sir E. Lloyd, through this Eden—as it is termed—of North Wales, with the little town and spire, seen on the hilly declivity before him, inspired feelings of deep serenity and repose, which it was long since he had experienced.

The fertile tract of valley in which St. Asaph is situated extends not less than twenty-five miles in length and eight in breadth. Watered by its pleasant river, its productiveness, as well as beauty, may be regarded as unequalled by that of any other district. From the Bridge, with its light arches, the Cathedral tower, dark and massy on the summit of the hill, is seen to much advantage. The structure itself, though the diocesan church, and the ornament of a bishop's see, has few pretensions to architectural excellence or beauty. Its history begins with Kentigern Bishop of Glasgow, who, like some Scotch pastors of recent times, being driven from his pulpit, withdrew into Wales, and established a Monastery for 965 monks, part for labour and part for prayer, on a plan similar to that of Bangor. He built a church, established a see, and made himself the first Bishop of St. Asaph. But, invited back to Glasgow, some time in the sixth century, he named Hassaph, a Briton of great piety and of a good family, as his successor, who, on his death, was interred in his own cathedral, in 596. It was first built of wood, and soon after of stone. In the reign of Henry III. it was destroyed by fire and sword; and, incredible as it may now appear, its English bishop reduced to live upon alms. It was rebuilt, and in 1282 again burnt to the ground, and restored by Edward I., who granted to it lands in Newmarket, Nannerch, Dincolyn, Coed y Mynydd, and a fine mineral tract in Diserth;—in all about 409 acres, valued at only six-pence each. In 1402, Owen Glendower set fire to it, involving the palace and canons' houses in the same conflagration. On this its bishop, one John Trevor, conceived it







THE TOWN

W. J. L. L. L.

THE TOWN



most prudent to join Owen's party, but was unexpectedly, in consequence, deprived of his see. The cathedral fell into ruins for the space of nearly a century, when it owed its re-establishment to Richard Redmund. This is the neat, plain, handsome building, according to Mr. Pennant, which is still to be seen. The choir was restored by the dean and chapter, in imitation of the gothic and noble remains of Tintern Abbey, of which the east window affords the most beautiful specimen.

The monuments are few; one is supposed to commemorate the munificent Bishop David, son of Owen, who died in 1512; and near the west door is raised a plain altar-monument to the good Barrow, who was first Bishop of the Isle of Man. His piety, and charity in founding schools, repairing the cathedral, the mills, founding alms-houses, and other good works, made him venerated and beloved. He had the honour of educating the greatest mathematician and the ablest divine of his age, Dr. Isaac Barrow, the tutor of the great Newton himself.

The members of the chapter are the dean, the arch-deacon, (who is the bishop) six prebendaries, and seven canons. Besides these, there are also attached to the parish church four vicars-choral, four singing-men, four choristers, and an organist. The palace was rebuilt by Bishop David, son of Owen, after lying a century in ruins, and was greatly enlarged and beautified by Lewis Bagot, in the form in which it at present appears. Near the Parish Church is seen a very curious tomb, ornamented with foliage, a shield with a lion rampant; and beneath, a sword held by a hand, with the inscription—*Hic jacet Ranulfus de Smahood*. It is said to have been brought from Rhuddlan; but there is no account of the person whose memory it is meant to perpetuate.

The eloquent and apostolic Beveridge was another great ornament of the see, and received the distinguished title of 'the restorer and reviver of primitive piety.' His *Private Thoughts* will preserve the purity of their fame so long as a spark of true devotion is left in the land. But good and great as he was, he was perhaps

surpassed in reputation by his predecessor Morgan, who succeeded the beneficent Bishop Hughes, and was one of the most celebrated linguists and deep-read prelates of any time. He was the chief translator of the Welsh edition of the Bible, printed in 1588, and he had some share in the English version commonly known as Queen Elizabeth's Bible.

There are some curious passages of ecclesiastical history preserved by Mr. Yorke, arising out of a quarrel between Bishop Morgan and Sir John Wynn, of Gwydir, in the year 1603. It would seem that the baronet took some merit to himself as an old patron of the prelate, and felt aggrieved that when made bishop he declined to confirm Sir John's lease upon the rectory of Llanrwst. In his letter to the new bishop, he dwells feelingly on his 'greefe to mysse, having never failed before in any attempt; that he had rather forego 100*l*. a year; that he had purchased the lease very dear, and that the bishop, by refusing to confirm it, would fall in the world's esteem.' To these charges the bishop pithily made answer—' I pray God that youre greefe of myssynge be not Achab's greefe for Naboth's vineard. Moreover 100*l*. landes, Sir John, are worth 200*l*. tyth. Youe have shewed me much kyndnesse, but no unhoneſt kyndnesse. Youe shall not be better esteemed by gettynge ungodleye requestes, but worse thought of; for to fayle of bad attemptes ys no shame; but to relinquish them will be greate credyt. So many chypps have been taken allreadye from the church, that yt is readye to fall. God hath blessed youe so well, that youe are bounde rather to helpe his poore church than to hynder it. Thus, with my heartiest commendations to youre selfe and good mystres Wynne, I reaste eveare youre owne in y<sup>e</sup> Lord,

WILLIAM ASAPHEN.'

In his reply to the bishop, Sir John begins—'*Hominiſus ingratuſ loquimini lapideſ;*' and, reminding the prelate of his obligations, ſayſ—' The ſower went out to ſowe; and ſome of hiſ ſeede fell in ſtonie ground, where hitt wythered, becauſe hitt could take noe roote. The ſeede waſ good, but the land naught; and juſtly ſoe

may I say by youe. I have in all shewed my selfe youre ffreinde, in soe much, as yf I had not pointed youe the waye with my finger, youe had beene styll Vicar of Llanrhayder. Youe pleade conscience when youe should give, and make no bones to receave curtesie of youre ffreindes. Nether was the losse of the thyng that I regard a dodkyn, but your unkinde dealinge. Hitt shall lesson me to expect noe sweete fruite of a sower stocke. Youre verball love I esteeme as nothinge; and I make noe doubt (with God's good favour) to live to be able to pleasure youe, as much as youe shall me, *et é contrá*.' Sir John then enumerates the various benefits he had conferred on plain William Morgan, who, when he became a great dignitary, 'remembered no more thereof, then that I had lent him my geldynge to go to Llandda, and had sent hym a fatt oxe att hys fyrst comynge to St. Assaphe. Which ys to strayne a gnatt and swallow a camell.'\*

The diocese of St. Asaph contains the whole of Flintshire, with the exception of the following parishes—Hanmer, Hawarden, Bangor, Orton-Madoc, and Wortenbury, which are annexed to the see of Chester. It includes the whole county of Denbigh, with the exception of the deanery of Dyffryn Clwyd, the chapelries of Holt and Iscoed, comprehended in the see of Chester, and Penley in that of Lichfield and Coventry; about half the county of Merioneth,—namely, the hundred of Mowddy, Penlyn, and Edeirnion; three parishes in Caernarvonshire, thirty-seven in Montgomeryshire; with eleven churches and chapels in the county of Salop; comprising in the whole one hundred and thirty churches and chapels, all of which, except seven, are in the gift of the bishop, whose revenues, as charged in the King's books, amount to 187*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.*, but the estimated value is from three to four thousand pounds per annum, to which may be added a most extensive patronage.

The town of St. Asaph itself contains few or no objects of interest to induce the tourist to pay it more than a passing visit.

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\* Royal Tribes of Wales, p. 139, 41.

The buildings erected are in general low and small, built of brick, and disposed in one long, uniform street. According to some returns made to Parliament, it consists of two hundred and seventy-two houses, with a population scarcely amounting to two thousand. But the surrounding views, from several points, fully suffice to attract the steps of the pedestrian, and more than compensate for any want of interest in the place. Besides the prospect already mentioned, there are others scarcely less inviting; that on the road from St. Asaph, along the common called the Row, is full of beauty; the vale is seen watered by the Elwy, which runs beneath lofty and richly wooded banks, and at its extremity the noble bridge appears to great advantage. The river there takes a new direction, running west and then north, along most romantic dingles, varied with meadows, woods, and cavernous rocks.

Neither is it destitute of antiquities. Y fynnon-fair, or our Lady's well, is a fine spring inclosed in an angular wall; there are the ruins of a cross-shaped chapel, finely overgrown with ivy, and highly picturesque as they appear from a deeply wooded bottom, not far from the bridge; thither, in the days of pilgrimage, resorted devotees of every rank and age, bearing offerings of their gratitude, or soliciting aid in distress. On the eminence above, appears the seat of the Lloyds, descended, according to Mr. Pennant, from one of the fifteen tribes, in whose right they enjoy the ancient seat of Hafodyn. The most splendid view, however, of these picturesque glens is from Pencraig, on the grounds of Galt-vaenan; thence you discover an innumerable variety of beauties—the milder and more softened features of the country.

At Llanerch, also, the Wanderer paused to admire the delicious view of the vale, with the majestic boundary between the Clwyd and Flintshire. The intervening grounds and inclosures running high up the hills, and various portions seen glowing with the purple flowers of the heath to the setting sun, and a succession of churches, hamlets, and seats, give at once relief and repose to

the whole scene. On ascending high above Llanerch, the entire valley breaks upon the eye, with the far western boundaries, and the tracts of the lofty Snowdon beyond. Midway from end to end, the prospect is enriched with towns and castles; and towering above the rest, frowns the rock of Denbigh, the shattered fragments of its castle crowning the summit of its isolated hill. Towards the north might be discerned the remains of the fallen Rhuddlan,—whither the Wanderer was now turning his steps,—and, in the distance, the dark receding mountains, perpendicular rocks, and the still mightier boundary of the ocean.

Proceeding across the country by Bodygan, Yrhiallt, Combe, Newmarket, Meliden, nearly to the coast, the traveller at length approached the ancient, war-famed site of Rhuddlan. This once grand station, with its palace-fortress, he beheld dwindled into an insignificant village. Its castle, the residence of royalty, was erected before the Norman conquest, by Llewellyn ap Sitsylt, early in the eleventh century. His son Gryffydd, having given umbrage to Edward the Confessor, was overthrown by Harold, who took the castle and burnt the palace. They were restored, under William the Conqueror, by Robert, a nephew of Hugh Lupus, who fortified the place with new works, and carried on a system of depredation upon the natives. It was partly destroyed by the warlike Gryffydd ap Cynan; but, in 1157, was once more restored by Henry II. In the wars of the country it frequently exchanged masters, and we have related how the siege was once raised by an army of itinerant minstrels, fiddlers, tinkers, and mountebanks. Earl Randle rewarded his deliverer by appointing him to the singular office of ‘Magisterium Omnium peccatorum et meretricum totius Cestreshire.’ By virtue of this legal instrument, we are told, the descendants of Hugh Dalton, in the reign of Henry VII., when the rights of Welshmen were allowed, preferred their claim to an annual payment of four-pence from every female of a certain notoriety within the county of Chester; and ordered all the minstrels exercising their profession to appear before them, or

their stewards, annually on the festival of St. John the Baptist. Neither were they to appear with unfurnished hands nor empty purse; each was to bring a lance, four flaggons of wine, and pay four-pence half-penny for a licence granted to protect him in the exercise of his calling. This privilege being annexed to certain estates, the custom was continued for centuries; and the anniversary, when modern minstrels went in procession to hear divine service in St. John's church, was observed till the year 1758.

The castle, it is recorded, was built of the red sand-stone found in the adjacent rocks. The form is nearly that of a square, and the walls are flanked by six round towers, three of which continue almost entire. The fosse is wide and deep, and on both sides the excavation is faced with stone. The steep escarpement to the river side was secured by walls, in which were placed square bastions, one of which is yet standing. The walls embrace a spacious octagonal area, round which were ranged different apartments. In one of these, while the English court was spending their Christmas at Rhuddlan, the consort of King Edward is stated to have given birth to a daughter. But according to tradition, the event took place at a private palace of the King, and an old house, still the property of the Crown, is supposed to have been the place of the queen's accouchement.

At a short distance from the castle, a Monastery of Black Friars was founded sometime previous to the year 1268; for in that year Anian, the prior, was preferred to the see of St. Asaph. It suffered in the frequent conflicts for possession of the castle; yet it subsisted, it appears, till the general suppression of religious houses, though no mention is made by Dugdale or Speed of its annual revenues.

Rhuddlan was made a free borough by Edward I., who conferred upon it numerous other privileges. The charter which he granted was signed at Flint. It appointed the constable of the castle to be mayor, and two bailiffs, elected by the burgesses, on Michaelmas-day, were to appear before him for administering of the customary oaths. The corporation were allowed the power of trial and im-







W. B. RAY

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VIEW OF THE COAST AND CASTLE OF ST. GEORGE.



prisonment; no Jews were permitted to reside within the town or precincts; and the burgesses had, besides, the liberty of a forest and free warren, with the important addition of a *gild cum hansa et loth, et shoth, sok, sak, et theam, et enfangentheft, et lib, per totam terram de Theoloniis, lestagio, muragio, Danegeld, Gaywite, &c.* When tyranny, it is asserted, in a future period attempted to abridge these curious privileges, and destroy their immunities, the men of Rhuddlan came forward with a spirited remonstrance, couched in law-latin, which, seconded by their fierce air and imposing numbers, obtained for them the desired redress. The burgesses to this day retain a voice in electing a representative to Parliament; but to be qualified, persons must be inhabitants of the place, or resident within what is called *Rhuddlan franchise*. The Clwyd is navigable to this place; at its mouth, where its waters seek the sea, is the port, at the Vorryd, where vessels come to take in corn, timber, and other produce of the country. Boats, of about seventy tons burthen, take advantage of the tide, which, running sufficiently high to the old bridge, built in 1595, carries them to the quay.

Morfa Rhuddlan is celebrated in history as the scene of many a wild and stormy encounter during the civil dissensions and foreign invasions which kept the Cambro-Britons almost continually in the field. As he trod its dreary, extensive marsh, the Wanderer recalled to mind that terrific conflict between the Welsh and Saxons, in which the latter triumphed, and Prince Caradoc, with the flower of his army, was slain. Nor did he forget, in his sympathy for the fallen, the noble and beautiful lament of the bard, the air of which is so exquisitely plaintive, as he breathed forth its patriotic malediction on the memory of the Mercian King, who, in the indiscriminate slaughter of men and children, preserved the objects of their tenderest affections to satiate the barbarous appetites of his soldiers.\*

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\* According to the Welsh accounts, Offa, the famous King of Mercia, was slain in this battle; but the Saxon Chronicle fixes the date of his death a year previous to it.

Here fled Gryffydd ap Cynan, pursued by his refractory subjects, to seek assistance from the Norman; but after receiving aid and hospitality, he attacked Robert in his castle, set fire to his possessions, and killed a number of his adherents. Incensed at his duplicity, the Norman Earl resolved to pursue him with unsparing vengeance, but the good fortune of the Welsh Prince—so remarkable throughout the whole of his career—still prevailed. On the third of July, 1088, Gryffydd entered the Conway with three ships, and leaving them on shore at low water, proceeded to ravage the country which belonged to Hugh Lupus, the uncle of Robert. With the singular ill-luck which attended his every undertaking in this last war, he ventured, while his soldiers were gathering from different points, to reconnoitre too closely to the shore, attended only by Osborne de Orger, and was surprised and slain.

On this wild tract imagination called up to view the hosts of successive nations which had battled for the sway of empire, and lay encamped around its once grand and threatening fortress. Along this plain had the English Henrys and Edwards—the founders of our military greatness—passed on to conquests which carried the English banners to the remotest East and West, in which they were at length nobly supported by the loyal Britons, whom they so long failed to subdue: within those ruinous precincts, buried in the unbroken sleep of ages, which he now musingly explored, throwing the broad shadow of faded glory on his path, had royalty triumphed, and revelled, and wept: for in those walls the crownless son of their conquerors had been borne captive, and thence carried with ignominy and reviling through the land which he had swayed.\*

In the lonely freedom of his spirit, the Wanderer smiled, half in sorrow, half in scorn, as he passed through the once magnificent gate-way of the castle, and contemplated the solitary gothic window

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\* Here, according to Giraldus, Henry II. was sumptuously entertained. The Earl of Northumberland seized the castle, in 1399, previous to the deposition of Richard II., who dined here on his way to Flint Castle.

of the hall which held the conqueror's parliament, turned to the ignoble uses of a common barn. How idle seemed the conflict of human passions—vaulting ambition—the petty pride and glory of kings! He felt the full truth of the psalmist's lament for the slain on the mountains of Gilboa, 'How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!' and how hollow, base, and vulgar, appeared to him then the pursuit of objects such as monarchs and their minion-lords had made to themselves idols of, at the expense of the happiness of countless millions.\* Alas! he thought, how long and dread an account have not ill-starred royalty, aristocratic baseness and treachery, priestly servility and rapacity, to render up of their stewardship,—of vainly and proudly assuming the direction of the destinies of the great family of man. How often have these halls and deserted courts rung with the glad voices of the proudest, the gayest, and the most lovely of England's once-famed nobility! Behold an example of the fortunes of the haughty and the vain-glorious of the earth; and as surely as yon once-towering bulwarks lie levelled with the dust, shall their strength and glory pass away, and their splendour become dim.

Formerly the residence of the native princes, Rhuddlan, after its fall, continued in possession of the English. Repeated attempts were made by the Welsh to regain it, and it sustained continual sieges till the final conquest of the country. It repulsed a terrific attack by Llewellyn and his brother David in the last contest, in 1281, and became the dungeon of the latter prince, previous to his ignominious execution. In the time of Charles I. the castle was occu-

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\*—————Ambition's honour'd fools!

Yes, honour decks the turf that wraps their clay!

Vain sophistry! in these behold the tools,

The broken tools that tyrants cast away

By myriads, when they dare to pave their way

With human hearts—to what? a dream alone!

Can despots compass ought that hails their sway,

Or call, with truth, one span of earth their own,

Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone?"

pied by the royalists ; but, after a brief siege, it surrendered to the able general Mytton. In the December following it was dismantled by order of the parliament.

Proceeding towards the elevation on the south side, called Tut-hill, whence the fortress was often battered, the Wanderer examined the traces of a still more ancient fortification, surrounded by a deep fosse, including the abbey, which crosses from the margin of the bank, near the ascent of the present road to St. Asaph, to another parallel road, and falls nearly into the southern part of the walled ditch of the castle.

From Rhuddlan, the Wanderer made excursions to some of the neighbouring spots of most interest, as he had before done from Flint to the ancient Caerwys, Halkin, Downing, and Llanasaph. Among these he selected Diserth, Gronant Moor, Prestatyn Castle, Gwaenysgor, where he passed some time in visiting the old sites and remains pointed out by Mr. Pennant; and, on returning, walked about five miles across Rhuddlan Marsh to Abergeley.

His entrance into Denbighshire by this less frequented route, presented him with some novel scenery, combining features of the wilder cast,—the sterile wastes, the sands, and coast views along the jagged shores, with the milder beauties of the interior,—the picturesque ruins of antique halls and castles, and the hills of Denbigh and Caernarvon, appearing with softened hues in the distance. Situated on the edge of Rhuddlan Marsh, its clear sea-air and noble sands render Abergeley, though a mean town in itself, a favourite resort in the summer and autumnal seasons. Along the same line of coast he advanced up to Llandrillo, to the still bleaker Penmaen Rhos, Rhos Fynach, and back by Llandulas. Being within a mile of the lofty precipice of Cefn Ogo, near the clayey cliffs which impend over the sea, he sought out the magnificent cavern, the entrance to which has been described as resembling the portal of a noble cathedral, arched and divided within by what has the appearance of a huge column. Tradition states, that in old times the sea here overwhelmed a vast

tract of inhabited country, extending at least two miles northward; and Mr. Pennant mentions an epitaph on the church-yard wall, shown as evidence on this head:—‘In this church yard lies a man who lived three miles to the north of it.’

In the vicinity of Abergeley the Wanderer also visited Cegidoc, formerly annexed to St. Asaph; and high above it the strong position occupied by Owen Gwynedd, after his famous retreat, and in which he foiled all the efforts of the invader.\*

Twilight was fast gathering on shore and plain, as the Wanderer bent his way to the beach of Abergeley, intending with the first gleam of dawn to pursue his walks through Denbigh to the more lovely and romantic neighbourhood of Llangollen. Night and silence began to draw closer their veil over the prospect far along the now dim-seen hills, and no sound met his ear but the rippling of the wave, or the dash of the distant oar.

‘Soft on the wave the oars at distance sound,  
The night-breeze sighing through the leafy spray,  
With gentle whisper murmurs all around,  
Breathes on the placid sea, and dies away.  
As sleeps the moon upon her cloudless height,  
And the swoln spring-tide heaves beneath the light,  
Slow lingering on the solitary shore,  
Along the dewy path my steps I bend,  
Lonely to yon forsaken fane descend,  
To muse on youth’s wild dreams amid the ruins hoar.’

*Tour through Wales.*

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\* Henry II., who, after severe losses already alluded to, found his progress effectually checked by the bold impregnable position called Pen y Parc. It is stated by Lord Lyttelton that he retreated to the Snowdon hills.

## CHAPTER VI.

LLANGOLLEN, VALLE CRUCIS ABBEY, CHIRK CASTLE, &c

BOLD, beauteous land ! where simple piety  
And freedom, in thy sanctuary of hills,  
Long nurs'd the light of Christian precepts pure,  
\* \* \* \*

Where honour walked in the glad muse's train,—  
Famed chiefs and loveliest woman homage yielded,  
In palace-hall and bower, to song divine,—  
Where antique customs—manly sports—frank bearing—  
'Neath laws of the good Howel,—left the fame  
Of Britain's virtues, brightening still through time.

*The Wanderer.*

To those who experience pleasure in mere change of scene, and a swift succession of inanimate objects, the characteristics of mind, the exertion of thought and reasoning, warm affections, or sympathy with the vicissitudes and sufferings of a people, too often, perhaps, appear wholly superfluous. Yet, without he carry some human sympathies about him,—some sensibility to the interests, wants, and objects of the people he visits, arising out of a knowledge of their history,—the traveller deprives himself of the finest and purest sources of enjoyment ; at the best, he only emulates the genius of a surveyor of roads and rivers,—a sort of courier-chronicler of hours, places, and distances, occasionally, perhaps, rising into luminous descriptions of circumstances and details which are pretty sure of being experienced alike, without anticipation, by every tourist.

To one of the Wanderer's temperament, at least, the kind of conventional preparation which such prescription of the beaten route involves,—the given how—the when—and the whereabouts—with the annexed description on the most recent scale, and distances in the exactest order,—had a peculiarly anti-locomotive power which

deterred him from taking many an excursion, especially if they applied to a country nearly as familiar to him as his own. He had, unfortunately, early entertained a foolish prejudice in favour of the old travellers, who dwelt with more complacency on manners and on men than on posts and mile-stones,—giving, with more clearness, their own notions of the characteristics and appearances which presented themselves, than the manner of getting over a certain space in a given period of time—agreeably to the latest improved method—and at an expence calculated something between a half-franc and a whole one.

For the same reason, the most elaborate description of external nature, or a succession of the most magnificent scenes and natural objects, could never wholly interest his mind. It was his delight to make himself familiar with the popular character,—the hopes and reminiscences of nations,—previously to his inquiries into their existing habits and pursuits, or their future prospects, like children of the same family whose parts and dispositions he had studied in the great community of man. With these views, the Wanderer had commenced his earliest rambles in the Principality, and he now left the more steril mountain-tracts and shores of Caernarvon and Flintshire for the interior of Denbighshire, where the wild romantic character of the country is agreeably relieved by the milder aspect and far-spreading beauty and fertility of plains and valleys. The signs of modern improvement, as he proceeded, gave rise to a fresh train of ideas, connected with the increasing comfort and prosperity of the inhabitants. Pleased with the contrast which more cheerful views and the happier appearance of the natives produced—for he now met fewer of the swarthy forgers and miners in proportion to the peasantry, cottagers, and woodmen,—he directed his attention to modern institutions, as well as to the more ancient sites to which any stirring or amusing recollections attached. Upon all sides he was struck with the marked changes which the last few years seemed to have wrought in the mind and character, no less than in the external features of the country.

Public spirit, general intelligence, new inventions, aided by the natural genius and industry of the people, had given rise to great undertakings, effecting the happiest of all revolutions by the progress of knowledge and national prosperity; and he now observed less of the barren or gloomy scenery than he had passed through in his former visits.

To speak, therefore, of this great and populous district, in the interesting periods of the great Roderick and his sons, or during the Roman, Saxon, Danish, and Norman dominion, is not his present object; for he began to feel a more living interest in the fortunes of this honest, frank-minded people, and in the numerous alterations, made since his previous rambles, which met his eye at almost every step. The fast-increasing value of territorial property and estates, the rapid progress in every branch of science, education, wealth, and agricultural improvement, forcibly called to mind the truth of that happy observation of the ingenious antiquary, Robert Vaughan, "we may well say we were conquered to our gain, and undone to our advantage."\*

Presenting a contrast of the most rugged with the richest and most picturesque features of landscape, this county comprehends 467,840 acres, including the fertile vales of Clwyd and Llangollen, finely wooded, and watered by the river of the former name. It contains ninety-five parish towns and townships, nearly fifteen thousand houses, upwards of eighty thousand inhabitants, and returns two members to Parliament. As regards its boundaries, Mr. Pennant is believed to have made the singular mistake of placing a great part of Denbighland, as it was termed, within the old principality of Powis. The largest portion, on the contrary, was comprehended in the upper division of Gwynedd, or North Wales; and it is described as bounded on the north and west by the Irish sea, from the Dee at Basingwerk to Aberdyfi in Merionethshire; on the south-west by the river Dyfi, separating it in part

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\* *Periissemus nisi periissemus.*

from South Wales; and on the south and east, by a mountain, river, or local discriminating line, till it again finds a boundary on the banks of the Dee. For a considerable time subsequently to the Conquest, Wales was not regularly divided nor equally governed; some parts were divided into shires, while others were not legally shire-grounds. In the latter portion the laws of England were not introduced, 'because,' as it is expressed, 'all the ordinary ministers and executioners of those laws, or persons vested with *Viscountiel* jurisdiction, are the officiating sheriffs, coroners, escheators, &c.'

Denbighland thus continued to be governed by its own ancient laws, directed by the usages and customs of the country. The constitutions of Howel the Good\* were thus long preserved in their original meaning, and the inhabitants were not subjected to the payments made by those of the more strictly incorporated circuits till the time of Henry VIII. That monarch executed a plan for the entire annexation of the Principality to the English crown.

Denbighshire, moreover, is bounded on the north-east by Flintshire, from which it is separated on the east by the Dee; on the north-east by Shropshire, on the south by Montgomeryshire and Merionethshire; and by the Conway, which forms a reciprocal boundary between this and Caernarvonshire, on the west. Its extent from north-west to south-west is forty-eight miles; its breadth twenty; the circumference one hundred and seventy; and the area is computed at six-hundred and seventy miles; it is subdivided into six districts. Upwards of twelve thousand of the inhabitants are employed in trades or manufacture, and nearly thirty thousand in the labours of agriculture.

Denbighshire to the west abounds with hills, at the foot of which are found small lakes which, with their falls, supply a number of meandering streams; the northern side is also mountainous, if we except part of the coast, and the lowland range which extends over the plains of Rhuddlan. It is observed of a portion of the district

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\* Hywell Dda.

by Leland, that 'this commote is the worst part of all Denbighland and most barren.' But from the *embouchure* of the Clwyd up to its source, along an extensive tract on both sides, the country is equally beautiful and fertile, stretching through the hundreds of Isaled and Ruthin into a delightful valley more than twenty miles in length, and from five to seven in breadth. Embosomed almost on every side by wild, barren mountains, presenting a marked contrast to smiling meads and rich productive tracts, suggesting only ideas of industry and plenty,—towns, hamlets, and mansions enliven the scene in every direction, and we are here reminded of the happy valley described by the author of *Rasselas*. Indeed, if we may judge from some remarkable coincidences, the great moralist would seem to have had Camden's account of the *felix vallis*, as he terms it, in a vein of ardent eulogy, really in his eye. Lloyd, Vaughan, Churchyard, Pennant, and their followers, whose descriptions it is pleasant to compare, and to see how Humphrey Lloyd and Robert Vaughan stand forth pre-eminent as sound authorities in disputed matters—are all equally enthusiastic, and seem to drop the anti-quarian tone in alluding to the delicious scenery of the Clwyd.\* Even the midlands of Isaled are no longer mere bleak and marshy tracts, supporting a diminutive race of cattle, and supplying only abundance of peat for fuel. Ruthin displayed a similarly bleak, uncultivated character, nearly as far as the middle of the former hundred; while the Cantref of Yale, overlooking Dyffryn Clwyd, equally abounds in high lands, so as to have led to the remark that though it *supplies* a great number, it does not *receive* a single tributary rivulet. The western hills of Ruabon are still in part bleak almost to savageness, and covered with heath and ling; they

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\* The author derived both advantage and pleasure, in his approach to this pleasant scene, by referring to an unpretending and excellent little work by Mr. John Smith, the well-known Lecturer on Education. It is the production of a man of enlightened views, and will be found a delightful and interesting 'Guide to Bangor, Beaumaris, and Snowdonia.' On the subject of the most recent improvements, especially a description of the Menai Bridge, and on other points, Mr. Smith's 'Guide' may be consulted with considerable advantage by all tourists.

afford excellent cover for grouse; the more subsiding and verdant portions are stored with cattle, and the smaller tracts at their base watered by pleasant streams. The fine, fertile valley of Yale relieves the eye from the sombre effects of the dreary heaths and desert moors. Bromfield—formerly called *Welsh Maelor*, to distinguish it from the English Maelor, in Flintshire—is included between the rivers Alun and Dee, and still preserves the like characteristics—a picturesque variety of wild sterility and abundance. Its products are coal, lead, iron, and various useful materials for the lapidist, whole mines and quarries of which, like those of slate and the common metals, are in full work.

Chirk—the Gwayn of the old Welsh—is almost entirely mountainous, Cader Ferwyn and y Syllattyn rising above the lesser hills, and the river Ceiriog, with its valley, dividing the upper part in a diagonal line. The rivers Rhaiader and Tanad mark the southern boundary, and form a junction midway on the line. From the snow-clad heights of Snowdonia a sharp keen air, added to that of the sea, diffuses salubrity, and the inhabitants, especially of Dyffryn Clwyd, have a bright, cheerful look, a sound constitution, rendered hardier by labours in the field; and instances of extreme longevity are not there remarked as extraordinary.

The leading rivers are the Clwyd, the Conway, and the Dee—the two latter forming the extreme bounds of the county. It is thought singular that it can boast not a single navigable river, a sea-port, or even tolerable haven, while numerous rivulets, forming tributary streams to these rivers, either flow from or traverse some parts of it. The mountain-torrent of the Ceiriog dashes forward towards the east till its confluence with the Dee near Chirk Castle. The Alun, near Llandegla, takes its circuitous course through Flintshire round the town of Mold, there turns to the southward through Hope-dale, and, passing Gesford, re-enters the county and joins the Dee below Holt. It has been described as taking a subterranean path, a circumstance alluded to by Churchyard in his *rhymes*—for his running doggrel can scarcely be called poetry—

‘ The river runnes a myle righte under ground,  
And where it springs the issue doth abound.’

This reminded the Wanderer of the anecdote related of Johnson, who, when examining a similar natural curiosity at Ilam, protested his want of faith, when the gardener assured him that he had put corks in a river at some miles distant from the spot where it was submerged, and caught them where the waters re-issued from the earth.

From Abergeley, near which was once the princely seat of Marchudd ap Cynan, cotemporary with the great Roderick, and descended from one of the royal tribes which gave princes to the British Empire,—he now pursued his way by Hendrefawr and Botegwall to Llan St. Sior. St. George, he here found, had his holy-well no less than St. Winifred; and here, in compliance with the superstitions of the country, the British Mars had his ancient sacrifice of horses; for the rich, we are told, were wont to offer him *one* to secure his blessing on all the rest. Being truly the *cheval-rous* saint, it was customary to bring all such animals as were distempered to be healed at his shrine; and when sprinkled with water, the benediction on them was ‘the blessing of God and St. George be upon thee, good steed!’ Similar efficacy was attributed to St. Ælian, near Landrillo, at whose well were dispensed many healing gifts, after he had received proper invocations at the adjacent church. He possessed also the police-genius of discovering the authors of thefts, and still better, of restoring the stolen goods. On occasion of sudden quarrels, the offended party would imprecate on his neighbour the vengeance of the saint, bidding him ‘to be gone with all the afflictions in the power of good St. Ælian at his heels.’ Mr. Pennant declares that he was thus threatened by a fellow, who, to crown his malediction, added, that he would make a journey to this well to curse him with more complete effect. But these, he happily found, with some of the singular old religious observances, to be fast on the decline. However occasionally perverted, many of them had their origin in noble and beneficent feelings, were very generally diffused, and though sometimes ludicrous, had often some good purpose in view,

and fostered a hatred and contempt for what was vicious or mean. At the name of the evil-one, for instance, in church, an old British congregation expressed their opinion of that personage by a loud and general spitting, the sound of which was meant to shew their utter disgust; and on hearing the name of Judas, they marked their abhorrence by striking their breasts. Wherever there was a well of our Lady, or of any saint, thither they resorted for the waters of baptism; over the coffin of their female relations, they placed a number of white loaves in a great dish, and a cheese with pieces of money stuck in it for certain poor persons; at every cross-way between the house and church, they knelt and repeated the Lord's prayer, again on entering the burial ground, and mostly sung psalms during the procession. It was considered a pleasant omen for the deceased if the rain fell while on their way, that his bier might be wet with the dews of heaven. Like the Romans, they were wont to strew the grave with flowers:—

—————' *Manibus date lilia plenis.*

*Purpureos spargam flores.'*

Bring fragrant flowers, the fairest lilies bring,

With all the purple beauties of the spring.\*

On the eve of St. John the Baptist, they would decorate their doorways with sprigs of St.-John's-wort—to exorcise any bad spirits—in imitation, perhaps, of the Druids who did the same with Vervaine, which, in the Welsh, bears the significant title of 'the demon's aversion.' The ardour and devotion shown in their religious exercises upon Christmas-day were still more conspicuous, and our custom of singing carols seems to have come to us from the more simple, earnest piety of the Cambro-Britons. Theirs, too, was the popular superstition, that the crowing of the cock, during the holy season, had power to banish evil influence of many kinds; a tradition of which Shakspeare, who seems to have had a poetical eye for all antique Welsh customs, has not neglected to avail himself:—

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\* Warton—Pennant: *Tours in Wales*, vol. iii. p. 160.

'Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long,' &c.

Kinmael Hall and Park, the seat of the Hollands, an old English family, who came into Wales in troublesome times, was the next object of the traveller's attention. They were very unpopular, it appears, and are said to have at last withdrawn, in dread of the sufferings it was probable they would encounter in the civil dissensions of the times. Pierce Holland, the eleventh in descent came into possession of Kinmael by marriage; and we are told, that in the wars of Charles and the Parliament, one of his descendants had two daughters, one of whom married Colonel Carter, and brought him the estate along with her. It was good humouredly observed by a wit on the Parliamentary side, that he had made choice of 'the best piece of Holland' in the country. His descendant, half a century afterwards, alienated the place to one of the Wynn family.

The sight of Foxhall brought to mind some recollections of the Rosyndales, who settled in Wales in 1297, and soon after changed their name to Lloyd. Near this ancient seat, according to Mr. Pennant, there upstarted a new Foxhall,—a magnificent design by Mr. Panton, Recorder of Denbigh, and member for the borough in 1601. It was his ambition to eclipse the old Foxhall, but, becoming bankrupt, he was compelled to sell his unfinished labours, with his estate, to the very neighbour whom he had sought to outvie.

Passing Llanerch and Ryffith Bridge, the Wanderer next arrived at Llewenny, where he recalled to mind the visit of Dr. Johnson in company with Mrs. Thrale, when she came to take possession escorted by the great Brewer, of 'at least five hundred a-year.' The rough diary kept by the Doctor is very dull and heavy, with but few gleams of vivacity, and less sterling merit as a record of the intellectual leviathan of his age. It fills up a chasm, indeed, of his life; but it is chiefly with rubbish, scarcely worth the observation of his biographers. The strength

of his sententious moral sayings, in some instances, plead an exception; and the Wanderer was struck with his admirable reply to Boswell, who foolishly remarked, that ‘the proprietor of *all* this *must* be happy.’ ‘Nay, Sir,’ said his Mentor, ‘all this excludes but one evil—poverty!’ Nor is the following less characteristic. On observing a small copy of his Dictionary in a library, he said, with eagerness, ‘Look ye! *quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?*’ At the side of it he saw Goldsmith’s *Animated Nature*, ‘and here,’ he added, ‘is our friend; the poor Doctor would have been happy to hear of this.’

From Lleweny, where he stayed three weeks, Johnson made short excursions into the neighbouring districts. He describes the river Clwyd as ‘a brook with a bridge of one arch, about one-third of a mile:’ and to Mrs. Thrale he wrote, ‘Boswell wants to see Wales; but, except the woods of Bâch y Graig, what is there in Wales that can fill the hunger of ignorance, or quench the thirst of curiosity?’ On one occasion, a certain Welsh parson was so much awed by the pompous manner in which the Doctor put his questions, that when asked by him if ‘Heb’ were a preposition or not, he cried out very comically, ‘So I humbly presume, Sir.’

After Johnson left Gwaenynog, the proprietor, Dr. Myddleton, expressed an intention of erecting in his grounds an urn in commemoration of his visit. When informed that this honour was meditated, Johnson seemed to dislike the idea, and observes in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, ‘Mr. Myddleton’s erection of an urn looks like an intention to bury me alive; and I would as willingly see my friend, however benevolent and hospitable, quietly inurned. Let him think for the present of some more acceptable memorial.’ His description of places, particularly of Chirk Castle, is sufficiently concise,—‘We came to Chirk Castle.’

Of the Myddletons, of Gwaenynog, there is extant a tradition of a singularly tragical event. David Myddleton, it appears, preferred his suit to Elyn, daughter of Sir John Done, of Utkinton, and gained the lady’s affections. But her parents preferred their

relative, Richard Done, of Croton, to whom she was compelled to give her hand. The marriage was indeed solemnized fatally, and at the hated husband's expence. The lover suddenly receiving tidings of what was passing, maddened at the idea of resigning her who loved him to the arms of another, met his rival as he was leading his bride out of the church, and slew him on the spot. Then carrying off the terrified lady, he married her on the same day; insomuch, it is observed, that she was a maid, a widow, and wife twice in one day. From Roger, the eldest son of this match, descended the Myddletons of the present day.\*

Lleweny is distinguished in early history for the Royal lineage of its possessors, and the events and vicissitudes it witnessed. In the hall was a portrait of the celebrated Catherine Tudor,—known also by the name of Catherine of Beren, from her possessions in the neighbourhood. She was heiress to Tudor ap Robert Fychan, married Sir John Salisbury, heir of Lleweny, and, on his death, gave her hand to Sir Richard Clough.

It is related that at the funeral she was led *to* church by Sir Richard, and *from* church by Mr. Morris Wynn, who whispered his wish of being her next choice; an offer which she refused with great civility, informing him that she had accepted the proposal of Sir Richard on her way to church. To console him, however, she added, that should she have to perform the same sad duty to Sir Richard, Mr. Wynn might depend upon her. She was as good as her word; for the fair widow presently became the wife of Mr. Wynn; and after his decease married Edward Thelwell, of Plas y Ward.†

Through the wild mountain region round Denbigh and Llanrhaiadr, Ruthin, and Llandegley, the Wanderer now approached the loftier rugged tract of Maes Maylor and the Berwin Mountains.

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\* Pennant, vol. ii. p. 174.

† In Mr. Yorke's Royal Tribes there is an engraving of this lady, from the picture already mentioned.



1872

St. Peter's Church, Westbury, Wilt.

1872







On beholding Eliseg's Column, near Valle Crucis, he recalled to mind that excellent antiquary and scholar, Robert Vaughan, 'the first who in these later days could read the inscription, of which he sent a copy to Archbishop Usher, taken before the Cromwellians threw it from its pedestal.' This column was raised as a memorial of the dead; a rude improvement on the ruder monuments of Druidical times. It was covered with inscriptions, and raised on a *tumulus*, according to the custom of ancient times, 'when pillars were placed under every green tree.' One of the inscriptions states, that the pillar was raised by Eliseg in honour of his grandfather of the same name; an adjacent township is entitled Eglwyseg, and the picturesque range of rocks, towering far above, bear the name of Glisseg. The ancient residence of these princes was the Castle of Dinas Bran, which commanded the vale from the most imposing site.

The ruins of Llan Egwest, or the Abbey of Valle Crucis, next met the Wanderer's view, at the foot of the mountains, watered by a pleasant stream, and shaded with hanging woods.

This was a house of Cistercians, founded by Madoc, Lord of Bromfield, and grandson to the famous Owen Gwynedd, who acted in concert with the great Llewellyn in 1215, when they captured a number of English castles. He was interred in his own monastery, described as one of the last founded and first dissolved.\*

From the drear and rugged summit on which stood Dinas Bran, the Wanderer beheld an extensive prospect of vale, and stream, and mountain-wild. Below him appeared Chirk Castle, Wynnstay, Pont-y-Cyssyllte,—that remarkable structure with its noble arches†—surrounded by villas, groves, hamlets, and hills.

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\* Owain, a poet of the fifteenth century, very highly commends the hospitality of the Abbots. Describing their style of life, he says, that their table was usually covered with four courses of meat, served up in silver dishes. and sparkling claret was their general beverage.

† As a work of magnificence and art, this splendid aqueduct is not surpassed by any structure of the kind known in modern times. It impresses the beholder with admi-

The deepening shades of evening were closing in ere the Traveller entered the Vale of the Cross—the region of Llangollen; scenes amidst which the lovers of the picturesque, or the sentimental, may give free scope to their tastes and fancies. It is wholly impossible to convey an idea of the varied beauties which lay around. Encompassed by spots as rich in historic interest as in their combination of natural loveliness and magnificence, from the heart of this enchanting valley the Wanderer could reach the famed retreats of Owen Glendower, and explore its wildest outlets to their termination beyond the great Llyntiged. To his left lay Trevor, Wynnstay, and Ruabon; before him, the vale and noble aqueduct of Pont-y-Cyssyllte. Crossing the mountain, he could re-enter the romantic scenery of Bala, on his way to the loftier beauties of Snowdonia, or he could take the route of Wrexham, so full of milder, yet ever varying objects of attraction.

Llangollen, the vale of the Dee, is bounded by chains of noble hills, the bolder features of which are softened by gentle rising knolls and swelling eminences, following the irregular direction of the river. Relieved by sudden breaks and openings, the scene

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ration of the extent of human power and skill, directed by the light of science, and executed by the combination of human energies and wealth. It is situated about four miles from Llangollen, extends nine hundred and eighty-eight feet, consists of nineteen arches, each forty-five in the span, without including six inches of iron-work in continuation at each end. The supporting piers are of a stone resembling Portland, pyramidal, and measuring at the base twenty-one feet by ten wide. The height is one hundred and sixteen feet, and over this spacious arcade extends a large open caisson, made of cast iron, eleven feet eight inches broad, by which the water is conveyed over the river Dee, one thousand and nine feet, to the opposite level. The effect of the whole upon the eye is peculiarly striking. Two iron plates are screwed together from centre to centre of each arch, and along one side of the canal is a towing-path, four feet in breadth, with a handsome iron balustrade as a defence.

The lime-works in the vicinity are numerous and extensive. The material is calcined on the spot, and rendered fit for immediate use. By means of the Ellesmere canal, the proprietors are enabled to supply the adjacent counties; also Liverpool, Chester, and other towns. The noble bridge, likewise, erected previous to the year 1357, by a Bishop of St. Asaph, is entitled to be classed among the proudest ornaments of Wales.

offers one continued variety of landscape, and, from the elevated terraced-road, new and extensive views of the surrounding district burst upon the eye. Rich spreading meadows and deep verdant woods skirt the bases of the hills, contrasting with the purple hues of their summits, and, refreshed by the windings of the silver Dee, are seen under every change that can delight the eye.

Genius of wild Llangollen ! once again\*

I turn to thy rude haunts and savage reign ;

Mid the grey cliffs that o'er yon height impend,

O'ershadowing mountains that the vale defend ;

Woods, whose free growth the gloom of midnight spreads,

And torrents foaming down their flinty beds ;

Within thy sheltered solitudes confined,

At distance from the murmurs of mankind,

I sooth to peace the cares of life awhile,

And woo lone nature's long-forgotten smile.\*

No less abounding in pleasing associations than in romantic beauty, every spot awakened some reminiscence of former rambles and past events. Plas Newydd appeared drest in the same simple charm and grace of nature. What were the real motives of its once young and beautiful inmates, in their early separation from the world? Was it eccentricity or romance that led two noble-minded women, in the bloom of youth, to seek the quiet shades of Llangollen? No! the Traveller perfectly agreed with Madame de Genlis, in her estimate of their real views—the virtuous happiness to be realized in shunning the follies and wretched dissipations of a crowded city. It was found, by pleasant experience, a choice perfectly consonant with sound reason, elegance, and good taste. To such as can appreciate the pursuits of cultivated minds, it is evident there could have been nothing of a conventual character in such a choice, and the wonder of a day, the repeated worn-out jest of female romance and singularity, was soon forgotten in the kindly

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\* Llangollen, a poem.

interchange of all the courtesies and charities of life,—charities not exclusively confined to an aristocratic sphere. The neatness and beauty of the surrounding cottages, and of the whole spot, more interesting, perhaps, from its limited scale, seem still to render homage to quiet virtue, as well as to the presiding mind of elegance and true taste.

Upon their first flight to Llangollen, we are told, the guardians of the young fugitives traced their steps, and brought them back to Dublin, for they were allied to some noble Irish families. The moment, however, they reached their majority, they quitted Ireland, and returned to their favourite mountains. Lady Eleanor Butler, having a considerable fortune, bought the grounds round the mountain, and built a plain house, yet sufficiently spacious, and elegantly decorated. Some meadows, gardens, an excellent library and drawing-room, adorned with productions of Miss Ponsonby's pencil, noble prospects from almost every window, completed the charm of refined life and manners, and gave a fresh zest to their peaceful retreat. Often they would leave the key in the door of their residence during absence, although they had a considerable quantity of plate and other valuable articles in their possession.\*

Llandysilio Hall, one of the handsomest structures in the vicinity, is situated on the banks of the river, where it assumes its wildest and most picturesque character. Mountains clothed with verdure, a small valley winding between gently swelling hills, with a tract of fertile corn and grass land in the foreground, afford a varied and very pleasing view:

‘ And through the birchen shades  
That sweep o’er Llandysilio’s sheltered glades,  
Seek the deserted fane, when day-light smiles  
Through the rent roof and dim discovered aisles.’

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\* Strange as this may sound to our ears, Madame de Genlis has not much exaggerated the truth. No where may you travel and repose with more perfect security than in Wales. Lady Butler died on the second of June, 1829, and her loss was severely felt by the surrounding poor.

Not far from Llangollen, to the north of the Dee, upon the declivity of a thickly wooded hill, stands Brynkinalt. The mansion was erected by the Trevors,\* and fell by marriage to the Hill family, who now bear the title of Dungannon.

The massy bulwark of hills, once crowned with the dark towering Castle of Dinas Bran, must have formed one of the most magnificent features in the whole landscape: the Bran, a small mountain-stream, stealing its devious way, still heightens the wild picturesque character of the scene. By whom, or at what period, the castle was founded is unknown; during centuries it was in possession of the Lords of Yale. In the reign of Henry III. it was the retreat of Gryffyd ap Madog, who flew thither to shield himself from the vengeance of his injured countrymen.† The fate of his sons, murdered in cold blood by their guardians, two English lords, is still a current tradition of the country, mingled with its favourite superstition of fairy-land.

‘Dinas! more beauteous thus in late decay,  
Thy castle clothed with pensive colours grey;  
Bleak mountain! yet more beauteous thus thy head,—  
Untraced but by the stranger’s lonely tread,—  
Than in thy gorgeous day, when tyrant power  
With trophies hung thy far resplendent tower.  
The British bard, at thy unhonour’d name,  
Points to the wreck, a monument of shame!  
So fall the towers, by vengeful time defaced,  
That stood when rebel arms their strength debased;  
Moulder the walls that hid the traitor’s head,  
When freedom to the field her Britons led.  
Wretch that expired’t within yon rocky mound,  
By solitude and terror circled round,

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\* The old lawyer, Sir John, had a very disagreeable cast in his eye, which led the wits to say, on detection of his criminal conduct, that ‘Justice was blind, but Bribery only squinted.’

† It was also one of the strong-holds of Glendower, in his daring wars with the English.

Vain was thy hope on Edward that reposed,  
 Vain the last wish thy dying breath that closed:  
 Yet ere the requiem bade thee peaceful rest,  
 Scarce cold the lip that uttered the request,  
 A stranger's hand usurped thy ancient power,  
 A stranger's banner glittered on thy tower.  
 Lo! the defenders grateful Edward gave  
 To sooth thy spirit hovering o'er thy grave.  
 Stern avarice and murder stalk around,  
 Sole guardians thy forsaken infants found;  
 No parent on their death-bed drops the tear,  
 No parent strews with flowers their honoured bier;  
 But the rude hinds their fate obscure bewail,  
 Traced in the strange traditionary tale;  
 And village girls point weeping to the wave,  
 Where fairies floated o'er their watery grave.'

The grounds of Wynnstay, richly wooded, extend to the village of Ruabon, and present many striking and picturesque views;—the wild and varied scenery of the Berwyn Mountains, with the vast chasm yawning through their sides, formed by the action of the Dee; the magnificent view of the river from Nant y Bell, rolling through the fearful clefts and falls, fringed with wood, till it terminates in a black and silent pool. Higher to the north rises the mountain, with its stern, sombre ruins fast commingling with its massy heights.

The mansion of Wynnstay, partly a modern edifice, situated in an extensive park well-stocked with deer, was erected at different periods. The more ancient part, mentioned by Mr. Pennant, consisted of a gateway dated 1616. On a tower within the court was inscribed the distich in allusion to the name of the house—Wynnstay; or, rest satisfied with the good things Providence has so liberally bestowed on you:

'Cui domus est victusque decens, cui patria dulcis,  
 Sunt satis hæc vitæ, cætera cura, labor.'

Struxit Johannes Wynn miles et Baronettus.—Anno 1706.







The Great Hall of the Temple of Mars  
 From the Temple of Mars



In the surrounding grounds, enriched with plantations, appears a noble obelisk, raised to the memory of the present Sir Watkin's father. The height is one hundred and one feet, at the base sixteen, the summit nine, and it is built with freestone and fluted. A gallery runs round the top, with a bronze urn, elegantly designed, in the centre. Round the base are wreaths of oak in the beaks of four eagles, also cast in bronze. The famous Offa's Dyke runs through the park, and near it, midst the fine romantic dingle of Nant y Bele, winds the river Dee.

Chirk Castle, on the line of Offa's Dyke, about three miles from Wynnstay, is of ancient date. It is supposed to have been erected in the time of Edward I., on the site of a fortress called Castell Crogen, by Mortimer, Lord of Chirk and Nanfendwy. Leland has described the place as it appeared in his time—'there is on a small hille a mighty large and strong castell with dyvers towers, of late well repeyred by Syr Wylliam Standeley, the yerle of Darby's brother.'\*

The castle is square and massy; the dimensions are spacious; the old gateway opens into a vast area, and the eastern side appears decorated with a handsome colonnaded piazza. Its once noble owner, Sir Thomas Myddleton, a brave champion of the Parliament, is drawn clad in complete armour, standing conspicuous among several portraits which adorn the walls.

The situation possessed all the advantages of strength and elevation requisite for a military fortress, and it consequently has a heavy, gloomy air, but commands a view over several counties and the surrounding beauties of the vale. It was famed in the desperate struggles of the Welsh to recover their independence, and, in 1164, one of the most sanguinary battles on record was fought here. Henry and his best generals were worsted, and the English slain were interred in Offa's Dyke. The King had

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\* Executed, for his trimming policy, by Henry VII. whose successor granted it, together with Holt, to his illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset.

recourse to the dastardly vengeance of putting out the eyes and in other ways torturing the noblest of his unhappy hostages.

Not a few amusing anecdotes are found connected with the neighbouring families of the Wynns and the Trevors, both of which are descended from Gryffydd ap Cynan, Prince of North Wales. By him it was first enacted that no one should follow the profession of a bard but who was admitted by the *Eisteddfodd*, or congress, held once in three years. He also prohibited them from invading each others province; nor were they permitted to degrade themselves by following any less dignified occupation.

Gryffydd was succeeded by his son Owen, whose exploits were the theme of rival bards;—

‘ Fairest flower of Roderic’s stem,  
Gwyneth’s shield, and Britain’s gem.’

This great leader died 1169, and was interred at Bangor. When Archbishop Baldwyn, on coming to preach the crusade against the Saracens, saw his tomb, he commanded the bishop to remove the body out of the cathedral, because the holy Becket had excommunicated him for intermarrying with his cousin. The bishop, in obedience to the charge, made a passage from the vault through the south wall under ground, and boring like a mole, conveniently shoved the body through it into the churchyard.\*

Sir John Wynn, already mentioned, was succeeded by his son Richard, who attended Prince Charles and Buckingham in their ridiculous matrimonial excursion into Spain, and who left an amusing account of his journey.† In one of his letters he says, ‘ We may think ourselves happy that have every thing in Wales; for both the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon are not worth one of our worst counties.’ He built the fine chapel at Llanrwst, from a design of Inigo Jones; but the roof was taken from the neighbouring abbey at Maenan.

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\* Yorke’s Royal Tribes.—Hengwrt MSS.

Yorke’s Royal Tribes.

Another, named Sir John, it appears was a gay character in his youth. In the eve of life he made a visit to the Court of Queen Anne. Here he met, after many years absence, his old school-fellow, the apostolic Beveridge, of St. Asaph. 'Ah, Sir John,' said the bishop, recognising him, 'when I knew you first the Devil was very great with you.' 'Yes, my Lord, and I wish I could say he was half so great with me now,' replied Sir John.

There is one more amusing trait respecting a Mr. Wynn, who was member for Caernarvonshire, and was famed in the annals of hospitality for his plentiful long tables. It happened that his old acquaintance, Bishop Sherlock, was on a visit with him, and observing, while at dinner, to the curate, that he was surprised he had given them no sermon that morning, 'Ah! my Lord,' said poor Ellis, in his broad, simple manner, 'had I *prached* when Master Wynne *is* in church, I shall have nothing but small-beer; but when I do not *prach* when Master *is* in church, I may have my belly-full of good ale, and welcome!'

From the same princely stock sprung the Lloyds of Rhiwardog, and one or two laughable anecdotes are related of their worthy kinsman, Roderic. He was related to the great chancery-lawyer Trevor, who, among his other qualities, was a great lover of economy. He had dined by himself one day, at the Rolls, and was drinking his wine, when his cousin Roderic was unexpectedly introduced by a side door. 'You rascal!' exclaimed Trevor to the servant, 'have you brought my cousin, Roderic Lloyd, Prothonotary of North Wales, Marshal to Baron Price, and a hundred grand things, up my back stairs? Take him instantly down my back stairs, and bring him up my front stairs.' In vain Roderic remonstrated; and while he was being conveyed down the back and up the front, his Honour removed the *bottle* and *glasses*. Still, it seems, he could not keep Roderic sober, if we may believe another adventure that befel him. As he was returning rather elevated from the club one night, he ran against the pump in Chancery-lane; and, conceiving that some one had suddenly struck him, he drew, and made a lounge at

the pump. Aiming a direct thrust, his sword entered the spout, and the pump, being somewhat crazy with age, fell down. Concluding that he had killed his man, Roderic left the sword sticking, as he thought, in the man's back-bone, and hastily retreated to his Honour's house at the Rolls, where he lay concealed for the night. In the morning, after hearing the story, and ascertaining the extent of the misfortune, his Honour came himself to relieve Roderic from his durance, not without some dry strictures on the danger of duelling by night.

## CHAPTER VII.\*

OWEN GLENDOWER, &c.

REFULGENT in thy golden bower,  
As morning in her eastern tower;  
Thy name the echoing valleys round—  
Thy name a thousand hills resound.

*Howel ap Einion.*

THE principal charm of Welsh scenery lies in its continual variety, its varied aspects, and novel effects. For this reason, perhaps, few people have visited Wales only once; and no one with the eye of a painter, or one feeling of the genuine traveller, studies its characteristics without deriving pleasure from that singular change of tone,—that succession of colours, lights, and forms, which, investing the grandest no less than the minutest objects, paints mountain, vale, and stream, like the flower, the lichen, and the rock, in a thousand dark or brilliant evanescent hues. It is this distinctive feature, doubtless, (admitted by travellers from every land who have traversed the Snowdon hills,)

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\* In now dismissing the name of the 'Wanderer,' who, it was observed by a high critical authority, had cruelly put the Author's *I* (eye) out, the latter wishes it to be understood, that notwithstanding such an occurrence naturally produced no very pleasant feeling *on one side*, he is not actuated by any motives of revenge. He has, in fact, most excellent precedents for treating the Wanderer in any manner which he may deem most expedient. Addison assigns as a good reason for killing off that amusing old gentleman, Sir Roger de Coverley, that he did it to prevent any less privileged person from *murdering* him; Shakspeare put to death his pleasantest characters without remorse; and Lord Byron was more than suspected of having thrown Childe Harold overboard in some part of the Egeian Sea. But the Author, less desperate in his remedy, merely persuaded the Wanderer to take a sail with him as far as the South-Stack Light House, Holyhead, where they dined; but, unfortunately, owing to some blunder of the *Irish* Sea, on their return the Wanderer lost his balance, and was seen no more.

which more irresistibly recommends it to English taste and imagination, inducing us to seek again and again the ever fresh and delightful scenes which assume, in their rapidly-passing phases, so many features to interest all those who are fond of change.

Thus, often as I had beheld the lovely region around Llangollen, it now exhibited itself arrayed in bolder lights and shadows, as novel as they were surprising. The autumnal morning rose brilliantly clear, displaying the surrounding scenery under the fairest and warmest colours,—the softest touches of the season scarcely yet variegating the rich green tints of the summer foliage.

The sky was cloudless, and the air serene; yet a few hours produced a change, almost instantaneously affording a scene, on entering the valley, as singular as it was wild and impressive. It strikingly contrasted with the appearances I had just before remarked: the sky grew dark and lowering; the deepening mists came sweeping on both sides from the Berwyn and the Brynelys heights, stretching above and before us, and all the milder features of the landscape, undefined and lost in the dim obscure, conveyed an impression of vastness and extent—embracing hill, and stream, and valley—which bore more of the character of wild Alpine scenery than any I had witnessed in my former rambles. Up the distant windings of the vale, and along the sides of the Denbigh hills, the thin rack and clouds came driving before the wind, and the continually changing aspect now veiled now gave to view fresh breaks of prospect, under a succession of the boldest hues and forms.

To behold the valley in its gloomier lights and shadows, I rapidly ascended the lofty sides of Dinas Bran, where the storm seemed brooding at my feet, while the magnificence of the more distant scenes lay still fully revealed to the eye. The low, distant roll of the thunder, the big uncertain drops of rain, and the driving mists, portended the gathering tempest; yet soon, to my surprise, the black shadows which rested on the hill-sides, as if endued with living power, began to rise and disperse, sailing away under the heavy

clouds, and threatening rain following the lighter rack and mists, which, rapidly as they had first obscured the morning skies, fled before the freshening breeze. The sun broke forth, streaking the fleeting clouds in a variety of splendid hues,—the mutterings of the tempest died away, and thick volumes of mist bore down the valley far away, till the prospect behind—Chirk, Wynnstay, and Ruabon—appeared like that of some dim, immeasurable sea.

As from the summit of Dinas Bran I eagerly beheld a succession of the wildest, the sternest, and the most lovely landscapes spread below me, I recalled the no less strange and varied fortunes of that lordly castle, now a heap of ruins beneath my feet. Here the pride of feudal chivalry had frowned defiance; and the light of high-born beauty had rained love and inspiration from her moon-lit bower upon the breast of her poet and lover,—the fanciful and impassioned Howel.\* How much more interesting on such a spot seemed the following mournful lines, and the wild, ardent strain of eulogy on the bright-eyed heiress of Dinas Bran:—

‘Far from Myfanwy’s marble towers,  
I pass my solitary hours.  
O thou that shinest like the sky,  
Behold the faithful Howel die!  
In golden verse, in flowery lays,  
Sweetly I sing Myfanwy’s praise.  
What though thine eyes, as black as sloes,  
Vie with the arches of thy brows;  
Must thy desponding lover die,  
Slain by the glances of that eye?  
Pensive as Tristan did I speed  
To Bran upon a stately steed,  
E’en at a distance to behold  
Her these fond arms would fain enfold;—

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\* Howel ap Einion Lygliw is known to have flourished about the year 1390, and became passionately attached to the beautiful heiress of Castle Dinas Bran. Her name was Myfanwy Fechan, and he addressed to her some exquisitely touching verses, which deplore the inseparable barrier which rank and pride had placed between the lovers.

Yes, swift on Alban steed I flew—  
 Thy dazzling charms more near to view;—  
 Though hard the steep ascent to gain,  
 Thy smiles were harder to obtain!  
 O fairer thou, and colder too,  
 Than new fall'n snow on Aren's\* brow!  
 O lovely flower of Trevor's race,  
 Let not a cruel heart disgrace  
 The beauties of that heavenly face!  
 Thou canst not with ungentle eye  
 Behold thy faithful Howel die!'

In that sort of day-dream in which the mind will at times delight, fancy pictured the grand castellated pile, its towers and marble halls, as they rose above all the scene in the day of their pride and strength. Nor was that princely beauty's secret bower, her rich-robed form, and soul-lit features,—nor a dark, but animated figure seen gliding by, and mingled voices with the harp's deep, sad tones,—absent from my thoughts, as the visions of other times rose in vivid colours before my view.

The blue mists had faded from the stream of the Dee,—the shadows fell on the deeper recesses of the hills; and, as I turned my steps towards Corwen, the Vale of Glyndwr<sup>dw</sup> opened on my view, enriched with villas, hamlets, and all that interchange of objects which gives to these pleasant valleys their crowning charm. The peculiar aspect of the day brought the words of one of our favourite poets† to my lips—words which gave an echo to my inmost thoughts:—

'When rising slow from Deva's wizard stream,  
 The blue mists, borne on the autumnal gale,  
 Cloud the deep windings of Llangollen's vale,  
 And the cliff glows with day's latest gleam;

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\* A mountain, or rather two lofty mountains, in Merionethshire.

† Sotheby.

Dinas, while on thy brow, in pensive dream  
 Reclined, no sounds of earth my ear assail,  
 I bid the ancient chiefs of Britain hail,  
     Spirits who oft, beneath the night's wan beam,  
 Strike the bossed shield, or blow the martial horn,—  
 Or mournful, on the castle's wreck forlorn,  
     Sigh to the sorrows of the druid's lyre;  
     O let me join the visionary choir,  
 That I may hear the tales of former times,  
 And drink with ear devout the bard's historic rhymes!

Not far from the spot on which I stood, the Lord of Bromfield, at the head of the men of Chirk, as already shown, humbled the pride of the Second Henry, who owed his life only to the intrepid devotion of his faithful Hubert, who received the arrow aimed at his master's bosom. The Pass of the Graves on Offa's Dyke marks the spot of that sanguinary conflict up to the present day.

Proceeding next along part of the valley—once the patrimony of the redoubted Owen Glendower—I sought in vain for a vestige of his mansion whose daring adventures and strange escapes by flood and field conferred on him the reputation of a magician, in addition to that of a skilful chief. For to conjure up 'spirits from the vasty deep' was deemed an exploit scarcely more wonderful than to resist, during fifteen years, the efforts of an English monarch remarkable for his good fortune, and supported by a chivalrous nobility and a martial people.

The disasters which invariably attended the expeditions of Henry the Fourth against the Welsh present a very remarkable feature in the history of the times, and, interpreted by popular superstition, were held a proof of the magic genius of the terrible Owen, and not less in the light of a just retribution on the usurping monarch, who had steeped his hands in kindred blood. The elements themselves, it was believed, conspired against the murderer of the weak, unhappy Richard, the friend and benefactor of Glendower, whose devotion to his master, and whose singular good fortune, excited the most ardent enthusiasm, not unmingled with awe, in the minds

of the Welsh. He alone foiled the power of the wary and martial Henry, who, resistless before every other foe, had quelled the pride of the most powerful nobles by whom he had been seated on the throne, and trampled even the laurels of the heroic Percies in the dust.

No higher honour could be awarded to Glendower than that he had repelled such an invader,—that the genius and power requisite for such a task were supposed to partake of a supernatural character, and place him above the roll of common men. Repeatedly at the head of England's choicest armies, Henry was compelled to retreat before a handful of Welshmen, headed by one previously unused to a military life. Glendower, like many of the Welsh gentry, was quietly studying law, when it was notified to him that Henry had granted a large portion of his paternal estate to Lord Grey of Rhuthin, who had, with that view, been undermining him in the King's favour by every species of falsehood. Owen fled to arms—a descendant of the Princes of Powys was '*not to be so treated.*' He took Lord Grey prisoner after a set battle on the banks of Evyrnwy, and, before he granted his ransom for a thousand crowns to the King, compelled his lordship to marry his daughter; after which he carried on the war with England during nine years.

When skill and valour failed before its veteran hosts, Owen seemed still to triumph in the terrors of those repeated storms and floods which broke the strength of the foe. Fire and famine, sharper than the swords of the enemy, pursued them, like some avenging fiend, till their scattered legions were supposed to have repassed those magic limits which had brought such a 'fearful pothor of the heavens' upon their heads. Though at times reduced to take shelter in caves and fastnesses, known only to themselves, the necromantic tactics of Owen were even then conceived to be busily manœuvring how to bring down fresh dismay and destruction upon the enemy. It was then he summoned his grand reserve, and charged, as it is quaintly expressed, at the head of his favourite company of the *elements*, which raised so tremendous a commotion

(as they did at his birth) that Henry and the English began to think they had got before the time into winter quarters. The dreadful signals of a new and more terrific onset fell on the startled ear of the murderer,—(for what usurper is not a murderer?)—he saw the black speck in the far horizon, dark as that upon his soul,—he watched the gathering of the storm upon the distant hills,—the blackening shadows which invested all-smiling nature in the hues of the grave, and heard the deep, low mutterings of its voice, as it rose with the sobbing of the mountain wind and the shrill whistling of the groaning woods. The old towering fastnesses opened the floodgates of their secret springs, when the din of the resounding cataracts, as the tempest grew into resistless might, must have come like the rushing of some demon's wings, fated to scatter and destroy. Hardened as he was, he must have felt the prevailing superstition of the people,—felt that there was more than accident in those awful visitations which dispersed his hosts like leaves before the autumnal blast.

Well, indeed, might the exploits of the once quiet law-student equal those of the most dreaded of *guerilla* chieftains—making England ring from end to end. Yet he was amiable and beloved in time of peace, affording a striking instance of that madness and desperation to which injury and oppression will drive the noblest minds. Often, during the intervals of the sanguinary war, he

‘ Loud, like a maniac, to the mountain gale,

Told of his country's wrongs the harrowing tale!’

And he left but too many memorials of his revenge to prove that ‘oppression driveth a wise man mad.’

Pleasanter thoughts, however, soon engaged my mind as I bent my steps through the lands of the veteran chieftain to Llan-saintffraid; and from thence by the meanders of the sportive Dee to Corwen.

## CHAPTER VIII.

DOLWYDDELAN CASTLE, BETTWS Y COED, RHAIADR Y WENOL, &c.

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The morning air  
Plays on my cheek how gently, flinging round  
A silvery gleam ; and now the purple mists  
Rise like a curtain ; now the sun looks out,  
Filling, o'erflowing with his glorious light,  
This noble amphitheatre of hills.

*Rogers's Italy.*

THE following morning was beautifully calm and fine ; the air, after the passing storm and rain of the previous night, was deliciously cool and refreshing.

At the entrance of a house in Corwen, I heard the strains of a harp, superior, I thought, in point of execution, nor was I deceived ; a number of persons, both natives and strangers, were listening round, not to an aged harper, but to a gentle looking youth, with a remarkably animated and poetical countenance. On expressing a wish to hear the old air of *Morfa Rhuddlan*, it was played for me in the noblest and most touching manner. This fine old lament still dwelling on the ear, I took my way to the antique church of Corwen, and speculated, with a sort of melancholy humour, upon the moral uses of the curious monuments, and that antique stone column in the churchyard to the memory of the great saint. The rocky cliffs of the Berwyn—once the strong-hold of Owen Gwynedd—tower above the spot ; and there, from what is termed his seat, the no less famed Glendower beheld nearly forty square miles of his possessions, chiefly watered by the Dee.\*

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\* At the seat of Colonel Vaughan is preserved, in an elegantly wrought case, a curiously shaped dagger, with a knife and fork richly ornamented, and bearing the arms of Glendower—a lion rampant with three *fleurs-de-lis* very highly engraved. The dagger is seventeen inches long, and tapers off to the point.

The route from Corwen to Pentre Voelas is perhaps the least interesting in North Wales; though on the road, about mid-way, the traveller is surprised and delighted by the picturesque scenery around a romantic bridge called Pont y Glyn. The river rolls over its rocky bed most precipitantly, and, passing through a deep and richly wooded ravine, is afterwards observed quietly enriching the vale below.

On my way to Cernioge, I turned off to visit the mountain of Pengwerwyn, about a mile from Cerig y Druidion, where, tradition says, Caractacus had a castle, in which he was betrayed by Queen Cartismandua, and sent prisoner to Rome. Here he delivered his well-known oration; and his noble appearance and dignified conduct produced such an effect on Claudius, that he set him at liberty.\*

Walking some two or three miles over the moors, brought me to the pleasantly situated inn at Cernioge, and having previously heard of the excellence of this house of entertainment I resolved to rest myself for a day or two; and truly the comfort and accommodations have not been exaggerated. This place has a decidedly English appearance, for in the yard were four large ricks of hay, (an extraordinary sight in Wales) extensive and well-built stabling, and the arrivals and departures were frequent. There is a large

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\* In the writings of *Tacitus* will be found a detailed account of Caractacus. On being placed before the tribunal at Rome, he delivered himself in the following manner:—‘ If to the nobility of my birth, and the splendour of exalted station, I had united the virtues of moderation, Rome had beheld me, not in captivity, but a Royal visitor, and a friend. The alliance of a prince descended from an illustrious line of ancestors; a prince whose sway extended over many nations, would not have been unworthy of your choice. A reverse of fortune is now the lot of Caractacus. The event to you is glorious, and to me humiliating. I had arms, and men, and horses; I had wealth in abundance: can you wonder that I was unwilling to lose them? The ambition of Rome aspires to universal dominion; and must mankind, by consequence, stretch their necks to the yoke? I stood at bay for years: had I acted otherwise, where on your part had been the glory of conquest, and where on mine the honour of a brave resistance? I am now in your power: if you are bent on vengeance, execute your purpose; the bloody scene will soon be over, and the name of Caractacus will sink into oblivion. Preserve my life, and I shall be, to late posterity, a monument of Roman clemency.’

pool in the neighbourhood, called Llyn Cwrt, well-stocked with trout, eels, &c., which afford excellent sport to the angler. The land about Cernioge Mawr is the highest between London and Holyhead. The moors, abounding with grouse, present extensive but unvaried and barren prospects.

Having passed over some sterile wastes, I reached the small village of Yspytty Evan, and striking into Caernarvonshire, over the river Conway, traversed the wild, lone districts near Hafod Evan, and from thence among the mountains to the dreary and sequestered lake of Conway. The changing mists and rack were driving over the wild adjacent moors, and several birds, apparently of the heron kind, rose from its surface, and slowly took wing towards the falls of the river. Hence over Pont Penfedw I entered the delightful valley, and soon the secluded little hamlet of Penmachno, with its white cottages, verdant farms, and pretty dwellings, scattered over the declivities, embosomed in the vale, or the deep sheltered recesses of the hills. No lovelier scene had yet greeted my eyes; it had all that patriarchal appearance of uninterrupted quiet and lonely beauty ascribed to the old pastoral life. And such it almost was; for here generation had followed generation in the same calm tenour of existence, and in the same unvarying pursuits. There was about it an air of serenity and solitude I had hardly before dreamed of, although I had before spent many days among the hills.

I had passed through scenes of the loveliest and the wildest character, yet the falls of the Conway, the Machno, the wild vale of Dolwyddelan—its heathy mountain and romantic pass, which lay before me,—excited the imagination and pleased the eye in an extraordinary degree. It was an hour well suited to the scene; over the dark, majestic mountain of Moel Siabod, and the dreary heights about Tan y Foel and Bryncoch, a splendid sunset was now closing, tinging vale and lake, as its last beams yet lingered on the ruins of the lonely tower of Dolwyddelan; from whose dilapidated and shivered walls, and ivy-mantled wreck of former splendour,







WATERFALL AND STREAM IN A MOUNTAIN



I looked down upon the rocky vale below, and the romantic pass it once commanded in the day of its power. Where the cattle now peacefully sought shelter in its lone, deserted court, chivalry and beauty once held sway; those battlements, grey and worn, casting their lengthening shadow upon the ruins fast mingling with the soil, had rung with the din of war; those tenantless halls re-echoed with mirth and song, or strains addressed to the ear of love and beauty, or the pride of some lordly chief. They, too, beheld from its walls the same far-spreading prospect, full of the same bold, picturesque beauties; but with feelings how different to those it now awakens in the lonely and thoughtful stranger's mind!

Rising from a bold projecting steep which overlooks the pass, in a wild, rocky valley, watered by the Lleder, the Castle appears from a distance embosomed in mountains, the crownless monarch of the scene. Dating as far back as the year 500—the work of one of the early Welsh rulers—it subsequently became the residence of Iorwerth Drwyndwn, the father of Llewellyn the Great, who was born at this strong-hold of the vale.

In dark and lawless times, the surrounding country became the prey of ferocious feuds between rival families and clans. One of these, descended from Owen Gwynedd, was opposed to that of Collwyn ap Tagno, and their wars presented a series of cruelties, perfidy, and deadliest revenge. To such lengths did they carry their animosity that Meredydd ap Jevan is stated to have purchased the Castle as a place of defence, whither to retreat from the violence of his own relatives,—although the immediate vicinity was beset by the most desperate factions, bands of outlaws and robbers. His predecessor at Dolwyddelan, Hoel ap Evan, was a noted robber-chief, yet Meredydd did not hesitate to take possession of his new castle; 'For I had rather,' he exclaimed, 'fight with outlaws and thieves than with my own blood and kindred. If I continue in my own house at Efnedd, I must either kill my own relations or be killed by them.' These quarrels between the great families most frequently ended in murder and assassination; and the valley of

Conway, which I traversed, witnessed the desperate deeds of lordly and gentlemanly banditti, who, in those unhappy times, made the people the sport and prey of their reckless conduct.

‘They would quarrel,’ according to Sir John Wynne, ‘if it was but for the mastery of the country, and the first good-morrow. John Owen ap Meredydd and Howel ap Madoc Vychan fell out for no other reason. Howel and his people fought valiantly: when he fell, his mother placed her hand upon his head to prevent the fatal blow, and had half her hand and three of her fingers cut off by some of her nearest kindred. An attempt was made to kill Howel ap Rhys in his own house, by the sons of John ap Meredydd, for no other reason than that their servants had quarrelled about a fishery. They set fire to the mansion with great bundles of straw; the besieged, terrified with the flames, sheltered themselves under forms and benches, while Rhys, the old hero, stood, sword in hand, reproaching his men with cowardice, and telling them that he had often seen a greater smoke in their hall on a Christmas evening.’

These flagitious deeds seldom met with any other punishment than what resulted from private revenge, and too often composition was made for the most horrible murders. There was a *gwerth*, or a price of blood, from the slaughter of a king to the cutting off one of his least subject’s little fingers.\*

How strange a contrast now appeared! The flocks were carelessly feeding in the very heart of these bandit-haunts; the grasshopper chirped, and the birds built under the shadow of the tower;† while the serene joy and quiet of a Sabbath evening seemed shed on every object around. The weed covered its antique arched

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\* Williams’s Caernarvon.

† The lower part of the tower, which yet remains, extends to forty feet by twenty-five, and would appear to have consisted of three stories, and a court-yard running between the two portions. The walls are above six feet in thickness, and constructed of the stone of the country. Mr. Pennant says that in his time there remained the lower portion of two towers, measurements of which he gives. One only, and part of a wall belonging to the second, now exist, although Evans, Nicholson, and most recent Cambrian Tourists, repeat the statement of Pennant, and give his admeasurement.







St. Peter's Church, St. Peter's, St. Peter's, St. Peter's

St. Peter's, St. Peter's



windows, the ivy and the wild laurel sprung from its walls and loop-holes, and the broken winding steps scarcely afforded footing by which to ascend. Around me rose its lofty, barren boundaries of hills,—including the vast, wide-stretching Siabod; the lone and craggy valley, and the waters of the Lleder, lay at my feet.

The small sequestered hamlet of Dolwyddelan next met my eye. Being the Sabbath, I met numbers of old and young in their neat, quaint, and antique costume,—the faces of the young maidens sparkling under their large round hats, and the children decked out in the old-fashioned style.

Entering a cottage near the picturesque little church, I was surprised to observe the singular appearance and costume of the occupants, all attired exactly in the same manner, and engaged precisely in the same occupation. They were three women, plainly but neatly dressed, and in deep mourning. They had a strong resemblance in feature and deportment, except that the eldest appeared to be almost palsied with age, being upwards of a century; upon further inquiry I learnt that she was the great-grandmother of the party,—indeed more, as her feeble foot rested upon an infant's cradle, which she was rocking to and fro with an accompanying motion of her body. Before her, on a table, lay a bible; the next in age was reading at another, and it was the same down to the youngest, who did not appear to be very young. Not unacquainted with prevailing custom, I stood at the threshold, but spoke not till I should be invited. Almost awed by this strict religious silence, I was at length retiring, for not a sign of welcome was seen, when suddenly it came from the elder of the inmates, as she seemed to catch my retiring step. The next to her arose and spoke the word, at which I stepped in. 'I am faint and tired,' I observed, 'with my long day's ramble among the hills, but I would not intrude;' and again I motioned to depart. 'Be seated,' was the reply. 'Then may I crave a drink of water?' 'No, never,' interrupted the most aged of the women, 'our family never gave water to the stranger;' and her daughter, going into an inner room, returned bearing milk,

honey, and oaten cake.\* With a heart-felt expression of thanks, I quaffed the milk with a relish which no wine had ever afforded, and the oat cake and honey appeared the most delicious fare. But these strange women had resumed their seats with the same stern seriousness as before, and I felt an uneasy sensation for which I could scarcely account. To my occasional observations or inquiries they made the most brief and uninviting replies. In the idea that I might touch some chord of human sympathy, I alluded to the sleeping child, and observed to the younger of the women that 'the mother of so fair a child must certainly be happy.' She fixed her eyes on mine for a moment, with a look of mingled surprise and delight, as she exclaimed, 'Oh, yes happy—surely happy,—strange that you should thus have spoken the truth: but not happy with us!' and she turned her face from me, and wept aloud. Catching her sobs, the most aged of all for a moment stopped the swaying of the cradle, put her hand to her head, and looked inquiringly around her, as if to recall something to mind. She counted upon her fingers the number of children present, looked down at the cradle, and then, with a low cry and half-suppressed agitation, which seemed to thrill through every fibre of her frame, and which had something almost appalling, she rose and tottered out of the house. I saw, in an instant, how I had inadvertently given pain, and expressed regret for having so far intruded upon their sorrow.

The way to the Falls and the Lake of the Conway lay by a track across the little churchyard over the hills. The evening was calm and beautiful—not a sound disturbed the still serene. As I paused, musing for a few moments, ere I entered once more the wild, magnificent barrier of mountains, I observed that same bowed and trembling figure of the aged woman standing, with her arms crossed upon her bosom, by a new-made grave. According to the custom

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\* In another instance the party applied to refused to supply the writer with water, yet had no other beverage but a small portion of buttermilk. With this they gave the water a slight sprinkling, and presented it to him: to have offered remuneration would have been an insult.

of the country, it had been newly planted with laurel and with box, and strewed over with flowers; a large stone lay at the head and another at the feet. The mystery of the women's manner was now clear; and this sight, together with the silence of the evening, in the lone, wild valley of Dolwyddelan, left an impression which was not effaced when I entered the valley and hamlet of Penmachno.

From the heathy heights above a magnificent prospect,—second only to those seen from Snowdon and Siabod,—extended itself on every side,—the lofty brows of the far Glyder Hills, the towering Carneddws of David and Llewellyn, and no less than seven districts, embracing the most secluded portions of Caernarvon.

On reaching the foot of the heights above Penmachno, I heard the voice of a Welsh preacher, addressing his congregation in a strain of fluency and nervous eloquence which made the hills resound. On turning to the spot, I saw a large chapel well filled with Wesleyans. I was curious to study the physiognomy of so large an assemblage of the mountaineers in the heart of these lonely hills, and took my station at the door,—for there appeared not a seat unoccupied, while the old church, at a small distance, was comparatively neglected; but soon a grey-headed, venerable man came forward, and invited me to walk in and be seated. I did so, and was surprised to observe the number of well-dressed persons of various ages,—offering a fine study to the painter, as well as to the moralist, in the heads of the old men, the beautiful and noble countenances of some of the young, and especially that of the youthful preacher,—ardent and eloquent, even to the boldest reaches of 'his high argument.' He excited his hearers to the keenest sense and apprehension of the great and wondrous truths by which he appeared himself inspired. He struck the chords of their inmost sympathies and sorrows with a master-hand; while he awed the hardened and impenitent by the most terrific appeals which can shake the consciences of men. Their countenances bore witness to the bold, successful style of his eloquence, which rung the

changes loud and skilfully upon the most opposite and the most absorbing passions of the mind: audible sighs were heard, and, when he rose to some higher and almost extatic bursts of eloquent truth, not even the oldest could restrain their emotions of awe, admiration, and applause. At times they would exclaim to each other—‘Hear him! Hear him!—it is God—it is Christ who makes him speak!’ nor did the young preacher himself appear less agitated, rapt, and inspired.

Desire of information and curiosity led me to the spot; but, on coming forth into the depth and silence of the mighty hills, at the foot of which lay the hamlet and the gentle gliding river, an involuntary feeling of reverence for all creeds,—founded on guilelessness, sincerity, and love of truth,—and for all those who conscientiously adhered to or differed from established doctrines,—gave fresh impulse to my love of perfect religious and civil freedom, without which pure religion cannot exist.

Down the wild, narrow valley, enclosed by the precipitous Bwlch Carreg, which throws its broad black shadow on the pass, and across the bleak, moory mountains beyond, I sought the source of the noble river Conway, situated in a singularly lonely and picturesque spot. The rocky, broken banks of the lake,—the still and dismal moor, with the lofty position of this secluded fountain of the hills,—its little islands, where the wild heath-fowl and the curlews haunted, or were seen sailing aloof in the spreading gloom of the evening,—had an unusually striking effect upon the mind. I marked that little rill at its source which, in a few miles, fed by tributary brooks, and uniting with the Machno and the Llugwy, swells into a broad, beautiful river, giving fresh charms to the highly-romantic valleys of Conway and Llanrwst. There is excellent sport for the angler in each of these streams.\*

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\* To those who visit the Principality, and are fond of the ‘gentle craft,’ the writer can safely recommend an unpretending little work, by George Agar Hansard, called ‘*Trout and Salmon Fishing in Wales.*’ It is, with great propriety, dedicated to Professor

Returning over the heathy and precipitous tracks, I bent my way towards the falls of the Conway. Never had I beheld a more impressive and startling sight, as I came suddenly through the dense foliage upon the sparkling and foaming waters. Vast, solitary, and terrifically beautiful, in the deepening shadows of an autumnal evening,—the wild over-hanging precipices almost meeting across the yawning chasm, from which is first seen the rushing fall of the torrent, broken midway by huge jagged rocks, and bursting impetuously into separate cataracts, strongly contrasting with the green woods towering over the summits, and the broad black shadows of the rock resting on the waters below,—with the continued roar of the falls, produced a magnificent effect. As I stood on an angle of the jutting cliff, midway in the descent, the wildly picturesque and sublime scenery brought forcibly to mind the spot so finely depicted by the bard, and I could not doubt that Gray had contemplated the same scene, from nearly the same point of view—

‘On a rock, whose haughty brow  
Frowns o’er old Conway’s foaming flood,’

so exactly, at that hour, did the sublime features of the prospect awake sentiments in unison with the boldly depicted sorrows of the last of the ancient bards.

By Fford Helen I came to that remarkable spot called the Graves of the men of Ardudwy, close to Rhyd yr Halen. In its circles of large stones, it presents the appearance of an ancient Carnedd, and it is believed to have derived its name from an adventure resembling, in some degree, the rape of the Sabine women. Two chiefs and their clans were at deadly strife, and sought only how to inflict the deepest insult and contumely upon each other. The men of Ardudwy having been worsted, conceived the desperate project of

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Wilson, ‘one of the most accomplished fly-fishers in Great Britain;’ and contains full accounts of the various kinds of fish—rules for fishing in Wales—on natural and artificial flies—the best angling stations—and particulars of the various lakes, rivers, and streams. There are some blunders in the orthography, which it is almost impossible to prevent.

carrying off the wives and daughters of their rivals of Clwyd. Taking advantage of the absence of the latter, they surrounded and bore from their dwellings the ladies of the vale; and, deaf to tears and cries, succeeded in bearing them off to their own territory, where they safely immured them in towers and strong-holds.

We may imagine the horror and rage of the warriors of the vale on their return,—the fury and swiftness of the pursuit. The bow of war was borne like lightning through glen, and vale, and hill; but in the first onset they encountered only the taunts and jeers of the foe from the ramparts of their forts and castles. In vain, instigated by revenge, they renewed the assault, till, finding open force unavailing, they had recourse to stratagem. Smothering their burning rage, they affected to be beaten off and return home; but, retracing their steps by a circuitous route, they formed an ambuscade close under the fortified positions of their enemies. Concluding that they had fled discomfited, the men of Ardudwy proceeded to celebrate their triumph, by compelling the captive maidens to marry their relatives and dependents, and, still armed, they bore them to the neighbouring church. It was on their return that the men of Clwyd emerged from their hiding-place, threw themselves between the foe and their homes, when a fierce conflict ensued. In vain, like the Sabine women, did the virgins of the valley cast themselves between the enraged combatants,—there was not an instant's pause in the work of death: so fatal was the stab of revenge that soon not a man of Ardudwy was left alive, and few and feeble were the warriors of the vale. Distracted at the sight, and the loss at once of their new lords and former relatives, a number of the unhappy women rushed wildly down the cliffs into a lake below, which from this tragic incident afterwards assumed the name of *Llyn y Morwynion*, or the Maidens' Lake.

The distant view of *Yspytty Evan* suggested ideas of less savage and revolting deeds in the days of chivalry. It was once a hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, the asylum of the persecuted, of travellers, the needy and the oppressed, under the guardianship of the old



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knights who held the manor. But soon, like the best-meant institutions, falling from its original uses and good purpose, became, on the extinction of the order, the prolific source of the evils it was intended to remedy.

Proceeding onward I passed over Pont Arleder, and along the banks of the Conway till I reached the village of Bettws y Coed, seated in a pleasing vale, surrounded by noble mountains, not far from the confluence of the Llugwy and the Conway. The scenery in this neighbourhood is much varied: in the course of 'a summer's day,' as Yorick says, the hardy pedestrian may view the most charming points of Welsh scenery—her picturesque valleys and majestic mountains—placid lakes and boisterous waterfalls—crumbling towers and castles,—and some extensive works of art.

The Church of Bettws y Coed contains an old monument in memory of Gruffydd, the son of David Gôch, who died in the fourteenth century, and was a son of David, brother of Llewellyn, the last Prince of Wales. There is yet the following mutilated inscription:—'Hic jacet Gruffydd ap Davyd Gôch, agnus Dei miserere mei.'

Over the river Conway, about half a mile from the village, is an elegant iron bridge, upwards of one hundred feet in span, built by the distinguished engineer, Telford, named Waterloo bridge,—having been erected the same year in which that celebrated battle occurred.

Just before the Llugwy joins its streams with the Conway, there is a remarkable bridge called Pont y Pair,\* thrown across the former

\* A native tourist (Mr. Llwyd) has observed, somewhat humorously, 'on returning to Bettws y Coed, we proceeded slowly to enjoy a continued view of the highest, grandest, and roughest mob of mountains anywhere to be seen; wishing, as it were, to crush Snowdon, which they surround. This view reminded me of the Bay of Biscay in the rage of a tornado. Rosa would have brandished his pencil with extacy on this scene.'

'In its passage through this village the river Llugwy meets with such obstruction amongst the rocks, that it becomes so shockingly infuriated in the conflict, as to have the appearance of a boiling caldron, from which circumstance, the bridge over it takes the name of Pont y Pair, the Caldron Bridge.'

river in several arches, strongly based upon the solid rocks. These natural piers, high and precipitous, overhang the dashing waters which break over the craggy ledges, on the points of which the bridge is so boldly and curiously constructed. In the wintry or stormy months, the meeting and conflict of this flood of waters displays at once the most fearful and most fantastic images to the eye. The falls and thunder of the torrents are truly awful; nor are the extraordinary contrasts and combinations of the surrounding scenery less in unison with the romantic character of the spot. The steep indented cliffs, grey and worn, fantastically clothed with wood, and the white dwellings dotting the hill-side, exhibit, blended into one, the mingled charm of the terrific and the beautiful.

Near the Holyhead road—which presents so many diversified views of rock and valley, deep woods, and mountain-torrents—midway between Bettws y Coed and Capel Curig, I came to the extraordinary cataract called, from its rapid flow, Rhaiadr y Wenol, or the Fall of the Swallow. It presents the irregular aspect of a hill of rocks springing from the very bed of the river, which produces all the effect of a bold break-water, giving redoubled force to the stream which divides and foams down in wild and airy leaps till it reaches its black and caverned bed. The contrast of its floods of foam with its dark waters below, reflecting the gloomy shadow of the towering cliffs,—the huge masses of projecting rock which receive the tumbling stream, flinging it into a thousand varied forms down a chasm of sixty feet,—the sombre woods which skirt the ravine, here and there concealing the torrent,—the varied hues of rock, and shrub, and moss, and spots of deep green verdure, give an air of enchantment, as well as wildness and sublimity, to the scene. Threading the recesses of the woods to the summit, I commanded a full view of the entire fall of the precipitous flood.

Before reaching Capel Curig, at a turn of the road, I beheld the singularly picturesque and rural bridge over the Llugwy. The river hurries its tide along its rugged channel on the left of the road towards Holyhead. The aspect presents a remarkable union of







*Red*

WATERFALL OF THE FALLS OF THE FALLS

*Near Chapel Hill*









THE MOUNTAIN OF THE MOUNTAIN, MOUNTAIN, MOUNTAIN,  
*by J. H. P. and C. H. P. H. P.*





rude and shivered rocks, rushing waters, and hanging woods; beyond which the extensive base of Moel Siabod, and the distant purple peaks of Snowdon, are distinctly seen. A few minutes after, the vale and lakes of Capel Curig are observed in the declivity,—in front nearly the whole of the Snowdon range,—on the right the Glyder hills, and on the left Moel Siabod.

From a rudely constructed bridge over the rippling stream immediately behind Capel Curig Inn, is a magnificent panoramic view. The sublimity and grandeur of this scene is probably unequalled in Britain. Each object is on an extensive scale—the mountains are bleak, yet varied and picturesque; and looking over the lakes, the highest peak of Snowdon is distinctly seen towering into the clouds in the extreme distance.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SNOWDONIA.

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The rocky heights explore,  
The Briton's last resource—his mountains hoar;  
Where weeping freedom from the contest fled,  
And Cambria saw her dearest heroes dead.  
Illustrious band! distinguished Arvon's boast!  
'Twas yours to lead in Gwynedd's warlike host,—  
For you, while wisdom dwelt upon his tongue,  
Your Taliesin's sweetest lyre was strung,—  
For you, in peaceful shades and tented plain,  
Flowed from his hallowed lips th' approving strain.

*Lloyd.*

RISING gradually and majestically from its rock-girt base, Snowdon\* embraces within its limits a distinct region of subject-hills, valleys, and lakes, stretching across the country in one vast unbroken chain from sea to sea. It was formerly considered, in fact, to comprise within itself a little kingdom; the Barons of Snowdon were the most potent lords of the soil,† and the seig-

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\* A name derived from the Saxon—the snow-clad hill; in the Welsh *Eryri*, from *Mynydd Eryrod*, the hill of eagles. Mr. Pennant, the best authority, seems to consider it to have sprung from *Creigau 'r Eryra*, or the eagles' crags; but its most probable derivation may be safely left to employ the industry and ingenuity of native antiquarians, distinguished for their profound knowledge of the ancient British language and antiquities.

† These Barons of Snowdon were justly entitled to be considered as the *Upper House*, and distinguished from the Commoners occupying the vales and low-lands. Accordingly, we find they exercised their privileges in a manner which a greatly-elevated position generally prompts men to do, and with a cavalier spirit often more surprising than pleasing to the lower houses of their neighbouring Commoners. It is singular, also, how nearly their peculiar feudal laws and usages are found to resemble those of the great Norman nobility, and the House of Lords of the present day.

niory of its broad and bold domain was always the most severely contested and the last resigned. Edward I. celebrated his final triumph over the ill-fated Llewellyn in jousts and festivals upon its plains; he often made it his favourite summer residence; it was chosen as the congress of the native princes, and of the bardic contests,—and palaces and hunting seats animated its wooded and well-peopled eminences. Now, a comparatively barren wilderness of heights spreads before the eye; naked massy ridges still rear their natural barrier against the skies; but the military stations, castles, and towers, which made them formidable, are seen no more. Their ruins only serve to awaken melancholy recollections of departed grandeur,—the sites of deserted halls, and bowers, and palace-fortresses, reft of their sylvan beauties, amidst these calm retreats and once lordly domains. Snowdon, like a vast mountain-fortress, boasted its defensive moat in the two rivers which, extending to Conway and Traeth Mawr, fall into the sea, giving to Anglesea that security, on the land-side, which pointed it out as the natural seat of sovereignty.

Improved by art, this position required only a powerful navy to have maintained the independence of the Britons from those fierce marauding nations which attacked it incessantly. The passes into the country were defended by the strongholds of Deganwy on the Conway, of Caerhun on the Pass of Bwlch y ddaufaen,—the Castles of Aber and Dolwyddelan,—strong forts in Vale Frangon, in Nantperis, Cedwm in Nant Tall y Llyn, and the Castles of Harlech and Criccaeth, on the open Pass of Traeth Mawr. There were towers also at Casail Gyfarch, Dolbenmaen, besides military posts and fortifications in the more exposed positions of the country.

The Snowdonian range extends from the heights of Penmaen Mawr in a succession of lofty hills to the triple-headed Reifell, which borders upon the Bay of Caernarvon. Its highest peak towers about three thousand six hundred feet above the ocean, and it embraces a compass of forty miles in length. The Carnedd,

called Llewellyn, approaches next in height; Moel Siabod the third; and, however inferior to the Alps—to the stupendous Andes—to the Cordilleras—and the Himalaya of other hemispheres, these British Alps partake sufficiently of the magnificent to impress the beholder with feelings of awe and admiration. If not on the largest scale, they can yet boast almost every variety of the noblest characteristics of mountain scenery—even to the terrible. In their darker hour, when the storm is up,—when the torrent pours its hoarser music with the autumnal blasts, and the near voice of the thunder, and the deep rolling masses of mist, convey the impression of some region seated among the clouds,—no traveller of other lands will pronounce Snowdon destitute of images at once fearfully beautiful and sublime.

The same variety may be observed in the character and aspect of the Snowdon rocks, in its minerals, and even plants, heaths, and mosses. In one spot is observed nothing except purple heath, in another reeds and rushes, and in the next the violet, the orchis, or the daisy in solitary abundance, richly scenting the mountain air.

As regards its mineral properties, the higher portion of the Snowdon chain is found to consist chiefly of porphyry and granite; the secondary rocks of horn-blende, schiller-spar, loadstone, whinstone, schistous, with combinations of quartz, feldspar, and argillaceous schist in all their singular varieties.

On the western side rise basaltic columns, beds of hornstone or chert, and in the openings are observed those massy crystals, cubic pyrites, and brilliant mineral veins which indicate the nature of the substances beneath, and with their varied streaks present at times a peculiarly bright and almost dazzling appearance, contrasting with and relieving the surrounding dark or shadowy hues of the neighbouring hills. Not unfrequently the lighter coloured spars might be mistaken for drifts of new-fallen snow, or mountain rills in the distance. The vicinity of copper is denoted by the ruddier hues of the surface, as in the red mountain; the duller slate by the schistous rocks; and it was thus I marked the granitel and

novaculite of Kirwan, and other mineral varieties, by their external character.\*

By these signs I was often assured of my vicinity to different mines and quarries, with as much certainty as by the sound of the blasting rock reverberating through the hills; and, in a similar way, those large silicious crystals, rock diamonds, and various specimens washed down their ravines and collected by the people, have directed inquiry towards their analagous substances, and fortunes have been frequently realised by mere accident, or casual observation of treasures not previously conjectured to exist.

If the gloomy and barren aspect of the hills is thus relieved by the variety of hues produced by their mineral formations, Snowdon is no less rich in the number and beauty of its heaths and flowers, affording a pleasant field for phytological research. Few regions will be found to supply more curious and interesting specimens for investigation to the adventurous botanist. In that beautiful tribe of herbaceous plants, the *Etheriæ* of Linnæus—seeking the loftiest habitats, and in numerous other genera, clothing with unexpected bloom and verdure the wildest spots, he may find a continual source of unfailing pleasure about the region of the higher lakes and hills. Not a few, indeed, are to be met with in no other district of Britain, and, most probably, ere yet despoiled of his floral and forest honours, Snowdon boasted more beautiful and varied, as well as more numerous, specimens of the different tribes. We can picture to ourselves something of his proud baronial domain thus enriched and decorated,—the charm thus conferred on those many picturesque localities which made Snowdon the beloved resort both of its native princes and of its conquerors. Nobly as Wilson—inferior only to Salvator—has depicted some of its wilder features,—the stormy torrent—deserted ruin—the tempest amidst the hills

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\* Of the novaculite, especially, there are numerous varieties round the wild district of Cwm Idwal, where a large quantity of hones are annually cut, and exported from the nearest towns and sea-ports.

and lakes; let us imagine it adorned with spreading groves—wide and lovely gardens round palace and lady's bower—the lordly castle towers frowning afar—the Hill of Council—the assemblies of chiefs and bards—the gay hunters clad in green and gold, with the then victorious last of the Llewellyns at their head, his favourite hound bounding at his side, and the opening echoes among the distant hills;—or behold him presiding at some solemn festival, surrounded by the chivalry of the land, in his magnificent castle near Aber, while the same aged bard who sang his dirge was then commemorating his early exploits.

And, now, disarrayed of his princely robes,—with the loss of his dignity and sway, we behold Snowdon only in his deserted majesty,—‘the crownless monarch of the scene!’ and vainly we try to recall the beauty and magnificence which surrounded him in the chivalrous day of the Norman Conqueror, which ushered in the yet bolder grandeur of those gigantic castles, the very ruins of which rivet and appal the eye.

On the morning of my first ascent the weather became gloomy and lowering, and I was disappointed in the expected splendours of a sun-rise seen from Snowdon. But, contemplating more than one expedition, I consoled myself with the hope of better fortune, and resolved to take the chances of any change by remaining the entire day upon the hills. I was aware of the capricious humours of the mountain monarch, especially on the conspicuous peak which most frequently he makes his ‘throne of clouds,’ when the rest of his subject-realm is perfectly bright and calm. How often I invoked the morning breeze to scatter at once the dense haze which enveloped me, and that which was as heavily obscuring the distant horizon! And soon I had my wish; a cool fresh breeze sprung up till it rose almost into a tempest, scattering the thick rack on every side.

The guide whom I had engaged at Capel Curig was perfectly acquainted with the localities. While he highly extolled the genius of the ‘Father of Guides,’ an aged man who lives at Beddgelert, and bowed with filial reverence to his remarks, he seemed to look

down upon the modern race of guides from an eminence little less lofty than the conspicuous peak, and when I proposed the more arduous ascent from Capel Curig over the great Glyder, he looked on me with an air of astonishment. In a tone of increased respect he lamented the effeminacy of tourists, and that eagerness for easy ascents and pony-parties which deprived them of the nobler views to be met with *on that side*,—the hotel, of so many stationary visitors,—and the guides of so much of their importance and prosperity. What was the flat unvaried ride from Llanberis compared with the wonders to be seen in going by Capel Curig, or even by old Beddgelert, or Llyn Cwellyn! But as it was all the fashion, one of these days, he supposed, they would be making a long-winded pony-road, winding miles round, and as smooth as a railway, the whole distance from Capel Curig to the top of Wyddfa. It had been projected, he said, for the last seven summers—it would be done *one of these days*, and we might then go up Snowdon in an easy arm-chair after dinner!

Not a little amused with the earnest and sarcastic tone of my conductor, I had taken my way through the long narrow valley of Dyffryn Mymbyr, with its two small lakes, approaching almost close to the little hamlet and church of Capel Curig. The grand Siabod rose on one side, and the shadow of the dark Glyder Bach fell on our path from the other. Along the sides of the lakes, and on patches of meadow, people were busy in their little hay-harvest, and the black massy barriers of hills were in striking contrast with the green bright hues of the banks of the lake and valley, and the more verdant, cheerful aspect of Moel Siabod. Snowdon lay before me, with its blue, or rather purple, peaks, softening downwards through every grade of colour till it terminates in the deep-brown and swarthy rocks in the foreground. Continually expanding and changing its aspects as we drew nearer,—the light haze moving round its summits, resting midway in deeper volumes,—now obscuring and revealing different objects and points of view, blended with the character of the surrounding scenery, formed a most interesting approach.

After leaving the lakes, the general view grew more perfect in its picturesque effect, in form, and hues; and I seemed to have caught the point most favourable for the display of its beauty and sublimity; for at every step the enormous chain of hills, appearing to detach and dilate in all their features, grew gradually rugged, shivered, and indented; the wild jagged rocks, with their serrated tops; the falls and ravines, the light-veined spars, set in relief by the darkest colours, with all the bleak and sterner features of the landscape, fell upon the eye.

Having passed through the Glyder hills, which presented views of the surrounding lakes and valleys scarcely less magnificent than those beheld from Snowdon itself, I entered the steep precipitous Cwm Glas, between Capel Curig and Beddgelert, and began the most arduous labour of the whole day. I had selected this route as partaking, I conceived, of the advantages of those able, indefatigable tourists, Pennant, Skrine, and Bingley; nor was I displeased to find that my guide highly approved of it, though he did not disguise its difficulties. He engaged to bring me to the finest points of view, without reference to toil or danger. By a broken, rock-strewn path—trodden only by the neighbouring shepherds—wild as it was precipitous, I reached the interior vales and lakes hidden in the bosom of the great mountains. It was one laborious ascent of a mile and a half, and both the guide and myself were well breathed when we gained the first resting-point. In parts the surface was spongy and boggy, with patches of green mosses and purple heath. Sometimes our progress was almost perpendicular over huge stones from rock to rock; in places it was loose and gravelly, in others a light elastic sward, and again as hard as adamant; but new and magnificent prospects began to open upon my view at every crag or hill which we surmounted. Now and then we had a sudden and bold descent, or came to patches of level at the head of a lake or glen, so singularly strewn with huge round smooth stones, as to give one an idea of some mountain giants having lately been amusing themselves at ball and marbles. Our second resting place overhung

the sides of a rock, broken into a number of small precipices, down the centre of which a mountain-torrent discharged itself from the source of the higher lakes. It was the Rhaiadr Cwm Dyli, and I now gazed upon the green vale and meadows stretching far below. The beautiful and romantic lake Gwynant, into which the foaming cataract empties itself—the deep hollow of Cwm Llan beyond, and, more near, the wild and lone Llyn Llydau, almost in the hollowed summit of a vast hill, winding beneath the rocks, whose bold, irregular projections cast their black lines upon its surface, with a still bolder cataract rolling above it,—all were spread at my feet in beautiful and majestic variety. Around me there rose, pile upon pile, those bold, columnar rocks, based upon the yet more massy walls of the exterior barriers; while, towering immediately above, the highest range of the Snowdon cliffs,—savage, black, and terrible to the eye,—threw their majestic shadow far over rock, and lake, and vale.

Yet midway of our steep ascent I had beheld views as lovely and beautiful as they were now stern and appalling. From the pinnacle of a cliff, whose broad black masses above the high lakes gave them a deeper hue, strangely contrasted with the ruddy streaks of the Red Mountain, we saw the heavy mists rolling in volumes along the sides and summits of the hills, and at times sweeping round and below us, producing the appearance of being enveloped in clouds. The prospect at that moment was bleak and wild in the extreme; and the sudden autumnal gusts, rushing at intervals through the glens and hollows, had a strange, unearthly sound, mingled with the distant blasting of the mines, and the cry of the raven wheeling above our heads.

The day became cold and stormy; the depth and blackness of the mountain shadows seemed to extend for miles, and a new horizon of clouds gathered over the ranges of hills below us. Soon the thick mists moved in tempestuous eddies, and for a few moments the prospect was singularly novel and sublime. Surrounding objects, and the summits of the loftier hills, appeared to roll with

the sweeping and dispersing fogs, as if agitated by the surges of the restless sea; and as they slowly fled, and the horizon began to clear, the splendid scenery below revealed itself more distinctly. The sun breaking forth illumined the mural steepes of the Lliwedd, and shed a sudden radiance over the lakes and vales below. The mountain wind, heard rushing through the fearful hollow called the Pass of the Arrows, died away; and the distant cry of the black gulls which haunt the little island on Lake Llydau, that had risen loudly with the storm, now ceased.

The contrast was singularly striking; the lethargy I had felt creeping over me, as the day grew black and wild, wholly subsided; and, standing on the site of an old copper-mine, half in sport, I hurled down an immense stone, which, after some tremendous rebounds, fell with a terrific sound into the waters beneath. Had my guide been shot he could not have sprung round more suddenly. His looks seemed to say that I had myself descended into the mine, and, as he appeared rather serious, I asked him laughingly, why Ryce of Cymdyli's geese (the jocular term for the black-backed gulls) had left off singing? A broad smile then lighted up his features, and he replied—'Why, Sir, I thought they had left that to the ravens when I heard something tumbling at such a rate, and knocking and splashing as if the mine was mad.' He then good-humoredly pointed out the sites of some old Hafodtai, or summer farms among the hills; the two Bwlchs of Maes Cwm and Cwm Brwynog (mountain hollows,) with the tremendous precipices overhanging them, and the black Lake of Arddwy stretched at their foot. He directed my eye to the Hill of Council, and to the deep, rock-embedded Lakes of Llyn Glas, Llyn y Nadroeth, and the Red Lake, reflecting in its waters the most brilliant and varied hues of its glowing mountain. Wild and beautiful, it appeared not unmeet, as tradition tells, to become the favourite haunt of Oberon and his fairy train in their moonlit revels.

The conspicuous crown of all our toils—the Wyddfa—rose in grandeur before us; Crib y Distill, with its serrated ridge on one

side, and on the other the fiery streaks of the Red Mountain, in strong relief against the dark-spreading boundary of the Lliwedd. The external barrier of Y Clawdd, terminating in lofty ridges, jagged and narrow, filled up the outline of the stupendous hills we had traversed in three toilsome ascents, but with unceasing delight and wonder. The weather—cold and wild for the season—gave fresh enchantment to the varying aspect of the clouds and shadows, especially of the upland lakes and valleys, rising in a succession of little regions within regions, resting calm and beautiful in the lap of the mighty hills. From the towering precipices overhanging Ffynnon las I beheld, through the deep hollows and ravines, a series of panoramic beauties,—hills crowning hills, and vales and lakes upon different levels, most picturesquely connected with each other by waterfalls.

A short way from the summit we met the old Guide of Beddgelert, whom my companion saluted with marked good-will and respect. It was a cordial meeting, and seemed to give equal pleasure to both. The old man shook him heartily by the hand, and regretted that he now saw him so seldom. ‘I am breaking fast, Robin,’ he said, ‘and you will see less of me soon.’

‘Now, you don’t look so,’ replied Robert, ‘it’s perhaps fancy; but these hard up-and-down trips are enough to break any body, let alone one of your years. It is time for you to turn gardener, like my father, and leave this work to the ponies and the easy-chairs—all the fashion now!’

‘Nay, I was a sound man,’ quoth the old Guide of Beddgelert, ‘till we had that unlucky long search after the poor gentleman.’

‘And so was I,’ retorted Robert, ‘sound in wind and limb, till I made a dray-horse of myself, and carried huge, heavy parcels on my back over the hills. Now, how old do you think I look?’

‘About fifty.’

‘There then—I am as old in back and bone, may be, as yourself. Why, man, I am not thirty yet. Only I have *broke* my back, you

see, and part of my wind—all for being too eager at carrying in my youth.’ The old man laughed, nor could his companion or myself forbear smiling at the quaint tone of Robert.

‘But who,’ inquired I, ‘was the young gentleman you were speaking of?’

‘A gentleman staying at Capel Curig,’ replied the old Guide, ‘and, thinking he knew his way over the hills, didn’t take Robin with him.’

‘That was the cause of it all,’ rejoined Robert.

‘So he left Capel Curig, you see, one day in October—far too late.’

‘Nay, it was not from *our* inn, I think,’ interrupted Robert; ‘Wasn’t he from Beddgelert?’

‘No, sure!’ replied the old man very seriously; but seeing us smile, he added, ‘Ah, Robin, thou wert always a bit of a wag.’

‘Do you know all about it, Robert?’ I inquired.

‘From first to last,’ was the reply, ‘and I will tell it you, Sir, anon.’ Then shaking hands once more with the old Guide he bade him farewell; and we resumed our way.

I now passed along the edge of several precipices to gain a nearer view of the great crater, right under the vast steep of Snowdon summit, and it was truly horrible and appalling to the eye. Thence we crossed along the sides of an almost perpendicular hill, on which was only a shelving and uncertain footing. At one moment I thought myself lost, from a sudden slipping of the ground, where no place was afforded either to recover myself or to rest. Considering it only right to give notice, ‘I am gone, Robert!’ I called out. ‘Come on,’ replied my companion, without turning his head, ‘we are just over!’ He could not have said any thing more applicable—‘We are just over,’ thought I, ‘indeed!’ I made a fresh effort, and was soon laughing at his side. The last half mile was more pleasant climbing—tolerably steep, but perfectly safe and easy.

This at length was Snowdon ! I stood upon the peak called the *Conspicuous*, where I long tarried to behold the surrounding scenes under every variety of aspect which the day might afford.

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‘ Thus ardent I behold  
 Thee, Snowdon : King of Cambrian mountains, hail !  
 Tremendous Snowdon ! while I gradual climb  
 Thy craggy heights, though intermingled clouds,  
 Various of watery grey, and sable hue,  
 Obscure the uncertain prospect, from thy brow  
 His wildest views the mountain-genius flings ;  
 Now high and swift flits the thin rack along,  
 Skirted with rainbow dyes ; now deep below,  
 While the fierce sun strikes the illumined top,  
 Slow sails the gloomy storm, and all beneath,  
 By vaporous exhalation hid, lies lost  
 In darkness ; save at once where drifted mists,  
 Cut by strong gusts of eddying winds, expose  
 The transitory scenes.—Here broken cliffs  
 Caught at long intervals ; anon a sea  
 Of liquid light, dark woods, and cities gay,  
 With gleaming spires, brown moors, and verdant vales,  
 In swift succession rush upon the sight.  
 Sudden on either side, the gathered clouds,  
 As by a sudden touch of magic, wide  
 Recede, and the fair face of heaven and earth  
 Appears. Amid the vast horizon’s stretch,  
 In restless gaze the eye of wonder darts  
 O’er the expanse ; mountains on mountains piled,  
 And winding bays and promontories huge ;  
 Lakes and meandering rivers, from their source  
 Traced to the distant ocean ; scattered isles,  
 Dark rising from the watery waste, and seas  
 Dividing kingdoms, and Ierne crowned  
 By Wicklow’s lofty range. Thou, who aspirest  
 To imitate the soft aerial hue  
 That shades the living scenes of chaste Lorraine,

Here, when the breath of autumn blows along  
The blue serene, gaze on the harmonious glow  
Wide spread around, when not a cloud disturbs  
The mellow light, that with a golden tint  
Gleams through the grey veil of thin haze, diffused  
In trembling undulation o'er the scenes.\*

And such was the grand and varied picture I had that morning beheld! I had thus seen the majestic clouds sailing down the summits before the strong, keen blasts, or resting midway upon the hills. Far as the eye could reach, a vision of wondrous power and admirable beauty now unfolded itself, awakening new thoughts and feelings in the soul, which trembled while it exulted in tracing the startling and majestic characters stamped by an Omnipotent hand upon these his glorious works. Sanguine as had been my expectations, that afternoon more than surpassed them all. The atmosphere became perfectly clear; the day, magnificently beautiful, displayed the thousand surrounding objects to the distant horizon of the sea, in the most brilliant and varied lights. The loftiest points of England, Scotland, and Ireland, were not merely shadowed forth, but were seen; while the Menai, Anglesea, the Isle of Man, and the surrounding hills and coasts, appeared to be spread immediately below the eye. The impression was that of a world of solitude stretching in a succession of prospects, fading into distant, softening vistas, as agreeable to the eye as to the imagination. In the light of a splendid sunset, which now began to illumine all the heights, the nearest hills and valleys glowed with softer and warmer colours; the numerous lakes and streams spread at our feet, losing the dull, black hues reflected from the impending rocks, were suffused with the departing radiance poured upon the summits,—a deeper and fresher verdure seemed to clothe vale and glen, and, in the dying glory of the sun-light, the sea beyond shone red and dazzling like a mirrored fire. The vast mountain-buttresses of

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\* A Tour through Parts of Wales.





THE MOUNTAIN CABIN  
FROM THE MOUNTAINS

W. H. WOOD





Snowdon\*—the colossal rocks, which prop its grandeur and its strength, rose in bolder relief, and the very horrors of the abyss—its deepest caverned waters—the hollows and gorges of the lower hills—borrowed a lurid light, more distinct, but more appalling to the sight.

The gradual twilight brought a succession of no less interesting changes of scenic beauty, and convinced me, that to see Snowdon we ought to remain upon its hills considerably longer than is usually done. I had noticed a succession of visitors who arrived, as if making a morning call, and, like ‘shadows that come and go,’ seemed quite as eager to depart. But there was a pedestrian from the lakes of Scotland of a different character, to whom I related my morning’s progress, and he observed, with enthusiasm, that in no part of his tour had he found greater enjoyment than in his walks through Wales.†

The descent from Snowdon into the vale of Llanberis presents many picturesque views, but not so majestic or beautiful as those on the side of Capel Curig and Beddgelert. A great part of the way is barren and monotonous; but this contrast served to heighten our pleasure on reaching the delightful scenes which had presented themselves from different points upon the hills.

Within a mile of Llanberis I entered a deep glen, crowned with wild, wooded rocks, at the end of which the fierce cataract of Caunant Mawr bursts upon the view. Pouring its mountain-torrent

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\* These natural bulwarks consist of five external masses of rock—the out-works of the interior region of hills and lakes. They are called Crib y Distill, and Crib Coch, between Llanberis and Capel Curig; the Lliwedd towards Nant Gwynant; Clawd Coch towards Beddgelert; and Lechog, a mountain which forms the south side of the Vale of Llanberis, near Dolbadern castle.

† In his recent ascents from different points, the writer had the pleasure of meeting, on the summit of Snowdon, several enlightened foreigners. Two German travellers and a young Frenchman were among the parties; with strangers from Scotland, from Ireland, and various other quarters. All seemed to feel the peculiar kind of interest to which the Author alludes, and he acknowledges the pleasure he received from their society.

sixty feet down rude, jagged rocks into a terrific abyss, it rolls foaming over the broad embedded strata into the vale of Llanberis, swelling the waters of its romantic lakes: perpetually supplied by the mountain-streams of Cwm Brynog, it rushes through a chasm of the rocks. The roar of its precipitous fall—the flashing of its waters—and the strangely sequestered aspect of the spot in the very gorge of the glen, had something inconceivably wild and melancholy.

The gloomy wildness of the distant view,—the dark, stern aspect of the rocks above—the solitary tower of Dolbadern, in the pass of the vale,—the mists rising over the lakes and hollows in the still evening twilight, now offered a marked contrast to the vast and mingled splendours I had witnessed from the heights above, and presented images as strikingly novel as they were grand.

It was soon moonlight, and I beheld a prospect mirrored in the silvery waters softer and more serenely fair than is seen in the glare of day. Vaster from their dimness, on both sides rose the rocky hills on which the moon shed a passing radiance, while a flood of liquid light rested on the bosom of the murmuring waters at my feet. The sound of the cataracts pouring from lake to lake alone fell on the ear. But few objects now recalled ideas of the feudal war and ferocity which once steeped these peaceful valleys in blood; the cattle fed fearlessly by the water side, and two old horses,—as if in derision of those chivalrous times, and the proud caparisoned steeds which flew to conquest or the chase,—were quietly resting under the very walls of the once dreaded donjon tower of Dolbadern.

From the projecting eminence commanding the lake and pass, on which lie the mouldering ruins of Dolbadern tower,—one of the few structures still left in the narrow passes of the hills,—I observed a skiff upon the water beneath, and, eager to enjoy a view of the castle and surrounding scenery from the lake, I hailed it, and joined two gentlemen who were fishing. They had, however, but indifferent sport; I afterwards heard that the neighbouring









copper works had destroyed most of the fish in the Llanberis lakes. The easy motion of the boat seemed to lull my wearied senses, like some soft and gentle air after the wild stirring music of a bold march. As I gazed upon the time-dismantled walls of the tower, Scott's fine description of Melrose Abbey—'and you must visit it by the pale moonlight,'—came into my mind.

Dolbadern was the central fortress of those commanding the passes into Anglesea and Caernarvonshire. It is built in a circular shape with hard, laminated stone, cemented with strong mortar. The inner diameter measures twenty-six feet, its height is between eighty and ninety, and the thickness of its walls nearly eight. It appears to have had three stories, besides the vaulted basement used as a dungeon; and the broken steps by which I ascended showed that the communication was by a spiral staircase. That it stood many an attack, the tumulus of loose stones at the foot of the lower lake, and other remains of ancient fortifications, offer a sufficient proof. It was accessible only by a single causeway. By whom it was founded, or at what period, must still remain a subject of conjecture. Mr. Pennant considers it the work of some Welsh prince, from whom, with the surrounding ground, it took its name; its erection, in this case, may be referred to the eighth or ninth century. The seat of feudal violence or revenge, a succession of hapless victims immured within its dungeon often filled the adjacent hills and valleys with cries of distress. Among these, Prince Owen, called Owen Gôch, the Red, was held captive by his brother Llewellyn, against whom he had combined with his younger brother. They were defeated in a sanguinary conflict, and Owen paid the penalty of twenty years' solitary captivity in this tower. In the wars of Glendower it frequently changed masters, being always considered one of the master-keys into the interior of Snowdonia. Its ruins are now spread over the entire summit of the bold projecting rock, exposing to view the massy foundations of the exterior building, and the site of its once terrific donjon.

Leaving the boat on the Capel Curig side, and the night continuing delightfully clear—a fine harvest moon beaming with unusual splendour through the heavens,—I was induced to proceed through a succession of majestic scenery, which assumed new beauties in the deep, mellow hues of such a night, over the grand Siabod, instead of returning back through the vale to the inn at Llanberis. And I was further persuaded to return to the spot from whence I had set out, by the hope of relating my pedestrian exploits, with the impressions still fresh upon my mind, to an old and valued friend, who had promised to join me during my excursion.

But previously I stopt to take refreshment and an hour's repose at a small, obscure inn—the only one I had seen for several miles. Yet I was informed by my guide that some twenty years ago, before the appearance of the present handsome hotels at Llanberis, Capel Curig, Beddgelert, and other picturesque points, the Vaenol Arms was considered one of the grand resorts—a modern Snowdonian station of travelling rank and fashion.

As I sat listening to the history of its past fortunes from the lips of the son of its once flourishing host, I felt forcibly the truth of the old Roman's observation, that 'times are changed and we are changed along with them.' Humorous and philosophical at once was the position of the young Welshman, with his deserted house of entertainment, which seldom saw either man or horse.

In the silence and desertion of the decayed inn I read an excellent commentary on passing affairs in Wales, and the gradual progress towards another state of things; which, with the increasing influence and prosperity of the people, will bind them in a still closer union with England, and engraft, I hope, upon the old British stock a few more English tastes and habits. Yet the observation of this important change produced a feeling allied rather to sadness than to satisfaction, though the old Vaenol Arms could still supply a cheerful glass, and, being situated in a large slate and mineral district, abundance of news in regard to local topics—the

quality and quantity of the produce—the current prices—the processes of disembowelling copper, tin, and slate from the interior of their primeval hills. The grand slate quarry of Allt Ddû, in the declivity of the mountain, on the borders of the lake, was the theme of hearty eulogy; and the name of Mr. Smith and Vaenol, pronounced with peculiar emphasis, and in a tone of respect bordering upon veneration,—leading me to further inquiries, I could not withhold my admiration of the public spirit and enterprize of the proprietor, nor—on subsequently witnessing the improvements and corresponding advantages of the inclined plane—of the industry and surprising ingenuity of the conductors and the workmen. The numerous railways, also, connected with the different works, are daily affording new facilities to commerce, and, by promoting the rapid interchange of commodities, and consequently the increased circulation of money, adding to the general wealth and importance of the Principality. With new supplies, fresh markets have sprung up in various directions; and new wants being created by the continual discoveries and improvements of science, the fertilising streams of intercommunication keep pace with the tide of population and national intelligence.

Soon I stood amidst the splendour of a serene autumnal moonlight upon the summit of the brown Siabod, and beheld the clear refulgent radiance and the reflection of the deep blue heavens streaming over hill, and lake, and vale, and tinging the purple peaks of Snowdon with a soft golden light. Nothing I had yet beheld—not even the glorious sunset I had seen from Snowdon, and over the lakes of Llanberis—was comparable to the far-pervading calmness and beauty which appealed to the soul more than to the eye,—a depth of repose which seemed to emanate from those silent skies which canopied the everlasting hills.

‘The silence that is in the starry sky;

The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

It was a scene before which the little passions and anxious cares

of man, reduced to their real proportions, with all their weakness, wretchedness, and insignificance, might 'flee away and be at rest;' the deepest irremediable sorrow seek a haven from life's stormy sea in the contemplations it inspires, and the memory of a world of vicissitudes and woes be for ever shut out from the mind.

'All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,  
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;  
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—  
All heaven and earth are still: From the high host  
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,  
All is concenter'd in a life intense,  
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,  
But hath a part of being, and a sense  
Of that which is of all. Creator and defence.

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Not vainly did the early Persian make  
His altar the high places and the peak  
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take  
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek  
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,  
Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare  
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,  
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,  
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r!'

But the thoughts of some lovelier and less troubled existence, inspired by the surpassing beauty and glory of the heavens from the spot whence I contemplated them, were banished from my breast ere I had well reached the termination of that night's wanderings, and by a circumstance singularly strange and affecting. Upon passing the little rustic church, at the head of the lake, my companion, pointing to the burial ground which surrounds it, observed that he would, now we had finished our long and difficult perambulation, explain the whole story of the young traveller, to whom some allusion had been made on our way when we met the old guide of Beddgelert.

‘It was on the eighth day of October, not quite three years ago,’ began my guide, seating himself on the low wall of the little cemetery, while I stood at the head of a large but plain monumental stone, placed in a corner of the ground below where he sat, ‘it was just the eighth of October, three years gone, that two young gentlemen, stopping at Capel Curig, wished to go to Beddgelert; and, for the shortest cut, determined to cross over the great Siabod Mountain, though it was then nearly two o’clock in the afternoon, and, thinking they were acquainted well enough with the country, without taking a guide. Had I known what they meant to do, I would either have dissuaded them from the attempt, or prevailed on them to let me go along with them, though I handled not a stiver—leaving it entirely to their honour, Sir, as I have done in your case. But they were not so lucky as to let me hear of it, nor a single soul at the inn! Why, Sir, it was a month too late to try such a journey—even had I been to accompany them,—and at such an hour of the day! But it *was* to be so; for as I saw them go out, as I thought for a short walk, he—that I never saw again till the shepherds brought him here on his bier—was laughing and joking to his friend in the highest spirits, and in a way that on going a journey is no good sign. There had been a long dead calm; but that afternoon it was too still to be natural,—the look-out, and in the distance was far too clear,—there were red streaks over the line of the sun’s going down all along the sky; old Snowdon and the hills about him looked much too near, while above the Ogwen and the Trifaen to the east it seemed as dull; and I knew there was a black spot, though I could not see it, to the seaward beyond the Lavan Sands. What struck me most was the closeness of the air, so unusual to the season, and which led the poor gentleman to observe, as he passed me, how pleasant it was; and he added what was true enough—‘You will see me again, Robin, before long.’ Though the waters were low, there was a dull, hollow booming among the hills, and, while not a breath was stirring, the lakes were beginning to be rough and restless—the birds flew low—and

here and there, over the falls of the Swallow and the Conway, I that morning heard the scream of the black gulls, and the old ravens, instead of sweeping round as they did to-day, were bending for the plains and hollows, knowing well enough that the earth was ready to yield them food. There was little need that afternoon for the shepherds to go far aloft to find their flocks; the herds of black kine, no more seeking the green or lofty points, came tossing their heads, and ran wildly to congregate in droves under the sheltered sides and recesses of the mountains. The few deer and goats were not far behind them, and even the fox and his brother vermin might be watched taking to their deep and secret lairs. But what I liked the least, showing the appearance of a heavy storm, were the fish, whose ways I know as well as most; for hours before it set in, they were busy enough disputing with the birds for their share of the flies and knats, which almost covered the surface of the waters, just handy and within reach. Every thing seemed quite still and afraid besides the fish and the pigs, and the last were noisy enough; they turned up their litter and the very stones with their noses. And if you had seen the scouring, and neighing, and tossing of the wild ponies,—and the spurring and whipping of some of the old farmers returning from market, and well nigh being washed into the rivers along with the mountain torrents, or crushed under the falling fragments of rock.

‘Yet while man, and beast, and bird, and fish, sought the lone covers and deep recesses above or below these old lakes and hills, those two poor gentlemen went forward full of confidence and high cheer, but with less knowledge and foresight of what was coming than the meanest animal or reptile that found a home, which that dreadful night they could not do, in the horrors of a tempest, amidst the wild Snowdon rocks. And in so far a mere beast is often wiser than a man, for such is the will of God—one has got it planted in him by nature, and the other has got it to learn. Well, it was such a night as I expected; the middle autumn winds\* and the waters

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\* By this term Robert Hughes poetically enough meant to designate the equinoctial gales.

were out, and the red lightning and thunder-claps seemed as if they would rive the hugest hills asunder with their bolts. But who thought those two young gentlemen were upon the hills till, about three of the morning, one of the people of the inn was awoken by the voice, or rather the groans, of some person crying out and knocking feebly for admittance ! Upon opening the door we were alarmed at finding one of the gentlemen, who had that afternoon left us, in a state of complete exhaustion, and with marks of wildness and terror in his countenance. After being recovered from the excessive cold, which seemed to have benumbed his faculties, he broke forth into lamentations upon the apprehended fate of his companion, who, he repeatedly declared, he felt assured was no longer alive. Upon being questioned he stated, that when midway over the hills on their way to Beddgelert, they were overtaken by the storm and the night, and became completely lost. To add to the horrors of such a situation, in their attempts to recover their path they unhappily became separated, and though he heard his friend's voice calling upon his name, so great was the darkness or the fog that he failed to rejoin him, after having once suddenly disappeared from his view. Long and vainly had he called and sought for him in all directions, and the most horrible feeling, which he described, was that of hearing the voice of his friend, through the storm and the darkness, growing feebler and feebler, as he conjectured, from their having wandered still farther from each other.'

'But surely,' interrupted I, 'their voices would tend to guide them towards each other.' 'That,' replied my informant, 'was the strangeness of the thing—you will hear—for it surprised and perplexed the gentleman, who could not explain how he had found his way back through the hills, and had not himself perished. He believed that he often heard and followed the voice of his companion throughout the night—borne feebly to his ear in the pauses of the blast, and again lost in the whirlwind and tumult of the tempest. On he went for some hours, almost momentarily expecting to rejoin him, whom he imagined he heard calling his own

name at a distance. By following the voice he had gradually extricated himself from the inner mountains, and at length found his way into the valley of the Mymbyr, at no great distance from the village.'

'He then,' continued my companion, 'hurried forward to overtake his friend, who, from the voice, he conceived was not far before him—but he could perceive no one—and from that moment the sound seemed no longer to haunt his ear. But a strange misgiving and alarm seized upon him, and he felt a melancholy prognostic that his friend was no more. He insisted forthwith upon joining the guides, who, being summoned from different places to the number of fourteen, hastened in hopes of discovering traces of the unfortunate young man. During twelve days all parts of the Snowdonian hills between Capel Curig and Beddgelert were carefully traversed, but nothing was either seen or heard of him. At length his friend and the guides were reluctantly induced to abandon the bootless task—not without some hopes that he might possibly have escaped alive. It happened that one day early in November, a party of shepherds, being driven to seek shelter from a sudden hail storm at the foot of a rocky recess in the higher hills, in the direction of Beddgelert, about three miles from the road, found the body—which they bore back to Capel Curig, where it was interred. From the appearance of surrounding circumstances, it was concluded that he had not perished from a fall, but had retired thither for shelter, and died of cold—perhaps in his sleep. And you are now standing,' continued my guide, 'at the head of his grave; and it is almost light enough for you to read the words upon the stone.' They were brief and simple—bearing the name of him 'whose death is greatly to be lamented.' I felt singularly affected, having just traversed by night the same hills upon which he had been lost, with the guide who had there vainly sought for him, and who, had he stood at his side as now at mine, might have averted the unhappy event.

'And I now see, Robert,' I observed, 'why you interrupted the

aged guide when he was about to tell me this unhappy occurrence; you thought it would damp the pleasure I should have in crossing the mountains; or, perhaps, that it might altogether deter me.'

'It was the first, Sir,' replied my guide, 'for you don't seem to be afraid of being left in the dark, or going alone with any one, either by day or by night.'

'And did his friends pay the last offices to him, or was he laid here by the hands of strangers?' I inquired.

'All that I know, Sir, is, that his sister was here, not more than three days ago, to see the place where he was buried—that I saw her as she stood on the spot where you are standing now; and this is the first and the last which I know about it. I have told you what I promised.' Turning away abruptly, and with apparent indifference, he began puffing the smoke from his short, well-practised pipe with redoubled activity and resolution. It had been his great resource in the intervals of our labours, and he seemed to esteem it a complete antidote for all evils; but I wronged him.

'I think you like that pipe, Robert,' I said, 'better than any thing else in the world?' 'No, Sir,' he replied, 'it is not just that, for I always smoke hardest when I feel the world's trouble coming upon me to stop it, and so it was but now.' Soon after, as we walked, he told me in a few words—no longer in the same careless tone he had before put on, and through volumes of repeated puffs—'how he had, not long before, lost the most lovely and promising of his children, a favourite of all who knew her. The news of it came much like that storm upon the poor gentleman, and I was thinking so of it, just as I broke so rudely away from you when I ended the story. No, Sir,' he added, with a mournful smile, 'there is something I love in the world still better than my pipe!' I stood rebuked before the simple and all-powerful voice of nature in the heart of a father—from the lips of an untutored but honest man.

## CHAPTER IX.

### TRAVELLING REFLECTIONS, &c.

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If countries we compare,  
And estimate the blessings which they share,  
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find  
An equal portion dealt to all mankind;  
As different good, by art or nature given  
To different nations, makes their blessings even.

*Goldsmith.*

AMONG the few real enjoyments of life, none, perhaps, surpass those open to the enlightened traveller in the absorbing interest of historical associations—in comparing the present with the past, and the progress of different people in the race of knowledge and consequent industry and prosperity. There is, indeed, one object in such a pursuit yet more laudable and ennobling, given only to minds like Howard's to appreciate,—the godlike pleasure of travelling, not to gratify his own tastes and feelings, but for the relief and happiness of his fellow-men.

The mere knowledge, nevertheless, of the social condition of a nation at different periods,—considered with relation to modern discovery and improvement, and to the progress of its neighbours,—must always be productive of advantage; and in no way can this knowledge be so effectually acquired as by cultivating personal acquaintance with the distinctive features and characteristics of different people forming one great community, subject nearly to the same laws and government. And how diverse, in all leading points, the genius and temperament of the Scotch, the Irish, and the Welsh!—while all as strangely differ from the great nation with which they have gradually become incorporated.

To estimate rightly the capabilities of each,—their moral, intellectual, and physical energies, and their actual social position in connection with European civilisation,—we must not only examine their existing institutions, but we must find the key of these, and of their present character, in their earlier fortunes—in their prevailing superstitions—in their heroic struggles—and in the degrees of social emancipation which have resulted from them.

At a period, also, so singularly interesting and momentous as the present, (when modern science presents us with immense facilities of intercourse,—one of the great instruments of civilisation, daily bringing the leading interests of mankind into closer communion, and embracing the most distant lands,) the traveller of the nineteenth century seems almost under a moral obligation to obey the impulse towards a more enlightened and purer state of society, when, under juster laws, the people shall command time and disposition to know the dignity to which every human mind may attain, and, so knowing, to assert it. Without, in some measure, blending his views and feelings and embuing his previously acquired knowledge with a knowledge of the capacities and wants of those amidst whom he sojourns, the wanderer is as unjust towards himself as he is ungrateful towards others, and in so far defeats the real purpose of all travel and discovery,—the increase of science and social happiness, instead of bringing a sword, peace and good-will to the heart of the stranger. When now, too, from the different points of the grand European roads extending on all sides, (the basis of future regeneration and improvement, which few statesmen dream of—the resistless vanguard of civilisation,) the bold pedestrian can enter the remotest districts, and easily come in contact with various classes and professions, observe the changes in progress, the fast-decaying traditions and customs which, like the sea and the land, can no longer resist the wonder-working triumphs of modern art,—he ought to aspire to something better than the idle curiosity of seeing, or the vanity of being seen. Let him follow where the genius of his country, and the age in which he lives,—

extending their influence to almost every land on which he can set foot,—would impel him, and, as an English writer, he would henceforth be received by other nations with even more gratifying distinction than he has been as a man.

It is thus, perhaps, the characteristics of the Welsh appear in their truest colours to the mountain-wanderer. No other can so well catch the minuter lights and shades of their character,—those points and peculiarities in their genius and temper springing out of former institutions, antique customs and traditions, and the progressive wants, and the capabilities to supply them, which constitute the community as it is.

By mingling as often as I could with natives of different districts, occupations, and professions, I sought to find the source of some of those peculiarities observable in the Welsh of the nineteenth century, and, among others, to account for that distinguishing loyalty and fidelity—that apathy and indifference to popular excitement, accompanied by a want of vigour and combination, as remarkable in the individual as in the body of the people. It struck me, that the same aversion to the adoption of English habits and manners might produce that dislike of political discussion, and apparent neglect of popular privileges, so strangely contrasting with the Irish, the English, and even the Scotch. But it was not so; the opinion of a whole people is seldom wrong, and I found that the calmness and equanimity of the modern Welsh—so inconsistent with their old hot spirit—resulted from fair and equal laws, a real adaptation and union of interests with those of the incorporating state. Welsh loyalty had its origin in a noble and lofty sentiment—the gratitude of an entire nation, and the still grateful recollection of receiving justice from their former oppressors, and at the hands of a descendant of their native princes, who rose to sway the sceptre by which they had once been enslaved. Hence, the inactive spirit, the quiet, patriarchal simplicity, the devotion to monarchy, and the passive obedience, forming so marked a contrast with that fierce insurgent spirit, so daring and irrepressible previous to the accession

of the House of Tudor. No stronger instance, indeed, could be adduced of the paramount influence of political causes in the moulding of national character; and could the Irish or the Poles have exchanged circumstances with the conquered Welsh, I have not the least doubt but their pacific disposition and devoted loyalty would have been equally conspicuous with those of the latter.

It is curious to consider how the fortunes of a people are found connected with some ancient prophecy or tradition; and, however we may smile at the idea of sanctioning the influence of the stars, the power of divination, and, in short, fortune-telling, history, both sacred and profane, tends to countenance the impression, and the most firm and enlightened are not at all hours wholly free from it. It is an historical fact, that few nations are without some one prevailing superstition,—some tradition which has exercised a powerful sway over their social and political existence.

Simply as an historical fact, it is worth remarking, that the old prophecy of the Welsh, so generally received, of one of their princes being destined to rule over all Britain, was borne out, not by the re-appearance of King Arthur, or by the triumph of Llewellyn, but by the event through which they seemed at length to behold its completion, in the accession of a Tudor to the British throne.

When Edward Plantagenet, in his pride of conquest, exposed to public gaze the bones of the famed son of Uther, and placed a bauble round the trunkless head of the last of the Welsh princes in derision of the popular tradition, he would have laughed to scorn the mere suggestion that, in one sense at least, the prophecy was still destined to be fulfilled—in the downfall of the mighty family of the Plantagenet by a descendant of those very princes whom he sought to extirpate from the soil. And as little imagined the Welsh they were to owe all that men should hold dear,—a wiser freedom, justice, and the regeneration of their land, with a participation in all the privileges of their conquerors,—to one of their princes seated on the English throne, who, with their aid, was destined to overthrow

the last and most warlike of the Norman kings. Such, at the period, was the respect for the national prophecy and the superstition of the Welsh, that, on landing, the son of Owen Tudor raised the standard of the Island Dragon—the ensign borne by the famous Arthur; and this appeal to their nobler recollections doubtless secured his good fortune, by exciting the enthusiasm of his countrymen.

Henry, sensible of the important services rendered him by the Welsh, repealed the obnoxious laws enacted by his predecessors, and subsequently, with a view of improving the internal government of the Principality, sent his eldest son, Prince Arthur, into Wales. He was attended by a council of laymen and divines, to assist him in devising means for its future welfare and prosperity. The prince restored many of their harmless rights and privileges, and established peace along the borders.

From this period we may date the marked change so observable in the character of the Welsh,—that calm and almost abject submission as relates to all questions of a political nature; while, however, they adhered as resolutely as before to their peculiar customs and their language. They have since, to all appearance, become a different people, showing as little disposition for change or innovation of any kind as they previously evinced for a peaceable life, when goaded by a vicious government. Even novelty and fashion, till very recently, could boast no charm in their eyes; and so far from an eagerness to shed each other's blood as of old, no persuasion of fortune, no hardship or disappointment can impel the modern Welshman to shed even his own. So great is the caution and aversion to change, that while the higher classes adopt with the English costume the English tastes and fancies, the simpler body of the people retain their primitive look and vest—still humour their old love of economy with linsey-woolsey, and wear few articles that have not been manufactured at home. Nay, the raw material must be also of native growth, or the home-spun does not sit easily and well. If they can be called proud of any thing, it is of their

industry, the good of their family, and the reputation of their country. And nothing pleases a genuine Welshman more than to behold the manufactured article, the old British costume, extending even to the confines of the metropolis, adorning its antique market gardeners, its milkmen, its fish or flower girls.

Yet, spite of his calm demeanour and steady habits, it often struck me there was a sort of hurry in the actions of a true-born Welshman, a want of despatch and sequence, either as regarded his work or his ideas,—defects which I was induced to think only better education could remove. The gradual introduction of an improved system in the conduct of business and the affairs of life seemed equally desirable, and a native writer\* has quaintly remarked—‘that from over heat and anxiety of mind the Welshman allows himself to be diverted from one labour to another; hence every thing is incomplete—leaving the appearance of confusion and negligence, and he thus does nothing well.’ Although this is more severe than just—I might add rather sharp practice coming from a Doctor of Laws, and a countryman—it is not wholly unfounded in truth, as I occasionally found, to my cost, in my progress through the less visited portions of Wales.

Of course, this is not meant to apply to the genius of the country, but to accidental causes, which more favourable circumstances would at once remove. Among the educated classes, how numerous have been the distinguished men who have conferred lustre upon their country by their deeds in the field or upon the ocean, their high qualities in the court, the cabinet, and upon the bench. And not less than in every department of civil government are they favourably known by their distinction in science, and in the various walks of literature and the polite arts. No equal extent of the empire, perhaps, has produced—whether for better or worse—more soldiers, sailors, and professional men. The battle of Maida, we are told, was a Cam-

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\* John Jones, LL.D. History of Wales.

brian achievement; the most distinguished officers at Waterloo, where all fought so well and some fell, were the sons of Wales. The mitre at all times has graced the head of a Cambrian; in medicine, the names of the ancient Britons are always found on the rolls of the college; and in jurisprudence Wales has always furnished more than her proportion of talent. And to sum up all,—if we wish to form an abstract idea of the perpetuating powers of research and labour,—we have only to mention the name of Abraham Rees! There is no want of real energy, then, whatever we may say of method, in the Welsh character. Want of intercourse and mental cultivation are favourable neither to habits of thought nor to skill and practice; and add to these the modern political restraints on the bold, free energies, and upon the amusements of the people, without finding some adequate substitutes in the dissemination of knowledge, and the improved condition of the people, to take the place of the ancient sports and games.

## CHAPTER X.

CAPEL CURIG TO BEDDGELEERT, THE VALE AND LAKE OF GWYNANT, &c.

PLEASURE, that comes unlook'd-for, is thrice-welcome ;  
And, if it stir the heart, if aught be there,  
That may hereafter in a thoughtful hour  
Wake but a sigh, 't is treasured up among  
The things most precious ; and the day it came,  
Is noted as a white day in our lives.

*Rogers.*

THE road from Capel Curig to the deep secluded scenery round Beddgelert presents a continued succession of sublime and picturesque views. Proceeding about four miles in the direction of Llanberis, I beheld to my right the wild, romantic pass called Bwlch y Gwyddyl, where the rocks, on both sides, rise to a stupendous height ; and on my left appeared a wonderful variety of prospects, as I pursued my path through the Snowdon hills along the banks of several lakes.\* Fresh vistas of hills, and vales, and waters, opened in all their loveliness or splendour upon the eye as I advanced. Here and there the broad black shadow of some rock threw its sombre hues upon the lake, while the flashing cataract or the glittering spar-veins, glowing in the sun, offered in other parts as marked a contrast and relief.

Soon I entered the charming and picturesque valley of Gwynant, where the once rich, abundant woods, the sparkling streams, and all the happiest interchange of the most varied mountain scenery, gave to it the distinctive title, with the surrounding region,

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\* The direct road,—now some time completed,—gives every advantage to the traveller, —offering the most favourable points of view ; so much so as to leave nothing as regards scenic effect to be desired.

of the Forest of Snowdon. And well, at that moment,—as I marked the thousand beauties spread around me in the mellow autumnal tints, the softened lights of the purple peaks, and the serene sky,—did it seem to deserve the name, and to awaken those touching associations which it is difficult, amidst scenes long deserted and again revisited, not to indulge. Before me, in the distance to the left, lay the picturesque old bridge, and with its noisy weir and sweeping streams, appeared to me, at that moment, no unapt emblem of the vain turmoil, the swift passing shadows of mortal emptiness and pride.

I felt a pleasing emotion, too, in contemplating the ruins of that little chapel, which had been consecrated by benevolence; for it was raised by the pious attachment of one who, after long absence, returned to repose beneath his native shades. In early life, John Williams left his native vales to try his fortune in the great metropolis. Having established himself in a small way as a goldsmith, he at length, by care and industry, accumulated a tolerably handsome fortune. This he had no sooner accomplished than he resolved to return, and promote the welfare of his countrymen among the hills and streams of his boyhood.

It was here that the union of stream, and lake, and fall, so peculiar a feature of the Caernarvon hills, most struck my fancy, giving that nameless charm to a solitary ramble which more than compensates for the loss of companionship, or the most arduous pedestrian toil. The fresh breath of morning fanned my brow—some new beauty continually broke upon the eye—the first red leaves blown across my path, or whirling in eddies down the currents, told the evening of the year was nigh; and the blue mists on the distant hills,—the beautifully variegated foliage of the trees,—the fragrant dew yet glittering on herb and flower, with the early matin song of birds,—the winds whistling through the mountain-hollows, and the far-off sound of the cataract,—all combined to inspire a freshness and elasticity of feeling which only the morning traveller can intensely enjoy.





T. S. G. 1848

From the summit of the mountain, looking down the valley, the river is visible, and the city of New York in the distance.





I could have chosen no happier hour or season for beholding the most lovely of all the Snowdon valleys under the thousand changing hues,—the now soft now brilliant touches—those deeper mingling lights and shadows of the falling year. As I passed by the margin of the broad, clear stream which joins the delightful lake Gwynant with the waters of Llyn y Dinas,—itself almost as interesting, and deeply embosomed amidst the towering rocks,—I heard the distant but gradually swelling notes of the hounds, the answering bay of the sheep-dog, which, with the tinkling of the distant bells, and the occasional explosion of a mine, had a singular effect amid the deep solitude which surrounded me. Upon both sides of the noble stream stretched a pleasant green-sward, so bright, so sweetly secluded,—if tradition speak correctly,—as to have been the favourite haunt, not only of the Snowdon hunters of other days, but of those more fastidious revellers, that love the moonlight to weave their deep, green circle, and their fairy spells by the flowery bank, or in the soft, fresh grass. And who but would linger by night or by day in a spot almost unrivalled for its combination of natural beauties, and which offers so many advantages to opposite tastes,—in the most pleasant and varied pursuits? Without having recourse to history or legend, the associations of heroic and feudal times, no where can the lover of science, the botanist, the angler, the artist, the antiquary, or the geologist, find more pleasing occupation for their several dispositions.

On approaching the vicinity of Beddgelert the remarkable rock of Dinas Emrys presents itself, vast, insulated, and wooded,—one of those monuments which carries the thoughts back to the days of genuine British fable and romance. Its height, its inaccessible steepness, and the large stone ramparts yet visible, still point it out as the stronghold of the feeble Vortigern, who, shrinking from the daring task which his treachery had planned, vainly hoped to screen himself from its consequences, by leaguings with the enemies of his country and appealing to the stars.

The no less singular and rock-girt mass adjoining to it, and known as the Groves or Caves of the Magicians, offers a curious subject for speculation, which may be pleasantly indulged by perusing some of our early British chronicles. A portion of these quaint narratives, appertaining to the origin and uses of the religious abodes, with the gigantic labours and no less gigantic superstitions of our forefathers, possess both imaginative and historical interest, and no slight fund of anecdote and amusement. Tradition will have it, that King Vortigern, or his successor, bestowed it upon the favourite soothsayer whose name it bears. By the Welsh it is called Merddin Emrys; and on its summit, from his diviner's cell, we are assured that the learned astrologer expounded the secret wisdom of the skies to the trembling monarch; and his exploits may still be read, to the no small gratification of lay and clergy, in the curious notes upon Drayton by the no less learned Selden. And thus it is said or sung:—

‘ Here prophetic Merlin sate, when to the British King  
The changes long to come auspiciously he told;  
And, from the top of Brith, so high and wondrous steep,  
Where Dinas Emrys stood, shewed where the serpents fought—  
The white that tore the red, from whence the prophet wrought  
The Britons' sad decay then shortly to ensue.’

As I now drew nigh the little hamlet through the magnificent valley, which, at every point of the road between Capel Curig and Beddgelert, presents some novel charm, I was struck with the sublime and desolate aspect of the mountain scenery. The expanding hills, casting a broader and deeper shade, their majestic dark-brown foregrounds, their grey or purple summits,—here the dense wood, and there the purple heath,—while rock, and stream, and fall, assuming a thousand varied and brilliant colours as they reflected the vivid noon-tide rays, told me that I was once more amidst the favourite scenes of my boyhood; and Beddgelert, revisited, inspired a feeling of tranquil delight not inferior to that with which it was first beheld. Absence, and long continued

residence in cities, when they do not quite obliterate younger emotions, and the early love of nature and rural life, give assuredly a fresh zest to their charm.

The pleasant site of Beddgelert, in the heart of these bold, romantic hills,—its smooth, green meadows and pleasant streams, its sylvan beauty, and the rich contrast of the scenes by which it is surrounded, with its many varied objects of interest sufficient to amuse every taste,—came more fresh upon the mind and the eye, after the agreeable excitement of my morning walk. It was here, after many days long and toilsome rambles among the Caernarvon hills, I was prepared, truly, to enjoy a brief repose, though I never felt less weary than when I wound my way along the river to the spot where the three valleys meet. It had the same serene and quiet pastoral look as when I visited it years before; and with renewed pleasure I watched the murmuring confluence of the Gwynant and the Colwyn; the river afterwards flowing through scenery highly romantic, till it reaches the wild falls and rocky breaks which surround Pont Aber Glaslyn. The afternoon of my arrival in Beddgelert was devoted to the enjoyment of its hospitable cheer with a few fellow-pedestrians I there met, to the luxury of repose, and the yet greater luxury of unexpectedly spending it with a companion of my school days. We had a delightful little banquet, at which social wit and good humour presided, with that pleasant idleness one most enjoys after laborious toil, whether physical or intellectual. I felt the force of Professor Wilson's remark, when I met him in his angling days at Ambleside, 'that to relish these moments of reaction with true zest, one must be out at least three days among the upper hills, and get a good sprinkling of the heavens, if we would know the right flavour of a social glass on our return.' The well-remembered hours I there spent in his fascinating society—where fishing, boating, and rambling were all his hobbies, though they ill disguised the repressed fires of eloquent genius and true poetry which glowed beneath the surface,—and with Mr. Wordsworth, then in his little cottage, on the banks

of Grassmere, above five and twenty years ago—(*cheu ! fugaces, Postume, Postume*)—came vividly back to mind as I sat with my old friend and my new pedestrian acquaintance in the modern-antique inn at Beddgelert.

Nothing was wanting to complete the charm of the hour, and it is accordingly marked in the grand archives of the hotel—deposited, of course, with the excellent host of the ‘Goat,’—as one of the whitest days of my Welsh wanderings. And it deserves to be among the pleasantest of my recollections, for it is assuredly one of the most courteous, hospitable, as well as the neatest of Cambrian inns. To estimate, however, at the full value, its excellent accommodations, the gratifying attentions of the good-humoured host and the exquisite flavour of his viands, the stranger should take a walk of some fifteen miles over the hills before dinner. He will then find the recent improvements on the part of the proprietor, with the alterations and embellishments of the intelligent landlord, (I mean *after* dinner,) the most judicious and elegant in the world, and, after his heroic pedestrianism, he will partake of the ‘otium cum dignitate,’—Anglice, a good table, the best wine and attendance, with the best grace imaginable. How it improves the flavour of fresh-stream trout, of mountain-mutton, and the pleasures of a siesta and a cigar, beneath the shade of trees beside the murmuring Glaslyn, it were needless to relate !

The views immediately around Beddgelert, though described by successive travellers as admirably adapted to inspire religious meditation, by the bleak ‘sombre character of the mountains, whispering groves, and tumbling waters,’ were far from producing any similar impression on my mind ; in part, perhaps, owing to the conversation of my friend, and a glorious sun-set which threw an enlivening splendour on every object far and near. So little was I ‘in the mood,’ that I put off my visit to the faithful Gelert’s grave, and to the little village church, till the ensuing morning, and took my way towards the rude, picturesque looking mill, with its noisy stream and rock-strewn bed. Its modern use and antique



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2. *Massachusetts*, 1890.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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appearance seem sufficiently at variance; but its lonely site, its rustic air, the dashing of its waters, with the whole scene around and beyond, are such as to arrest the eye of the painter. Though many of the cloud-capped rocks towering above no longer wear the noble mantle of their patriarchal oaks,—ill exchanged for the darker hues of the fir,—they give a wildness and grandeur to the picture, especially when beheld from an eminence above the village, which no eye can behold with indifference.

Returning after a quiet evening stroll to the inn,—I ought rather to say the Beddgelert hotel, for it may vie with the best in modern taste and true British comfort,—I remarked on my entrance the old Cambrian sign of the Goat, which the rage of innovation has yet spared, with its appropriate motto for the neighbourhood—‘*Patria mea petra*’—my country is a rock. While amusing myself with conjectures as to its age and origin, I saw the old guide of Beddgelert, whom I had met on Snowdon, and thinking, perhaps, I might be in want of a Latin dictionary, he approached, and saluted me with great courtesy. He treated me to a Welsh interpretation, and after a learned discussion made sundry inquiries appertaining to his younger contemporary of Capel Curig,—in other words ‘the lad Robin,’ withal he looks at least sixty,—and expressed himself in high terms of his topographical learning, his industry, and civility. I could do no less than ask him to drink ‘the lad Robin’s’ health; and a conversation, which might have borne reporting to the Antiquarian Society, was unhappily cut short by a whole tribe of little spar and crystal sellers, who, followed by the bare-footed representatives of the spinning and knitting interests, with their incessant clamour of ‘buy, buy, buy,’ speedily put us both to flight.\*

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\* ‘At Beddgelert, as in many other parts of Wales, the children of the poor constantly beset strangers, offering to them crystals and specimens of spar, which the mines afford in great abundance; and it is seldom that an English word can be got from them beyond “Yes,” or “No,” or “*Coppar, coppar*,” which latter word they use as they offer a specimen, and it might be supposed that it was copper ore they wished to part with; but they mean copper coin is what they want.’—*Smith’s Guide to Snowdonia*.

In the idea, I suppose, of making the close of the day harmonise with the rest, I found that my worthy host had prepared a light but excellent supper to welcome my return. Finding that he was as intelligent as he was good humoured and attentive, we afterwards requested his company; and by his exact local information and shrewd remarks,\* he left me less cause to regret the interruption of the learned conversation with the ancient guide. I was soon master of the prevailing topics of the village,—to say nothing of its history, topography, and antiquities,—all the little changes, past or in progress, and all those varieties, vicissitudes and freaks of fortune—about as important on the rustic stage as upon the wider theatre of mighty cities.

It was no want of employment, therefore, as that agreeable and observant tourist, Mr. Bingly, says was his case at Beddgelert, but the surpassing beauty of the following night, which again tempted me forth.

Proceeding only a short distance, I first beheld the mountains of Craig Llan soaring high above the river which bathed its base, and immediately opposite to the inn. The clear full moon, which threw a mild splendour upon the summits, shone with yet brighter radiance, reflected by the water in strong contrast with the broad, dark shadow of the hills, which lay on the banks and part of the stream. Ascending an eminence, on the Caernarvon side above the vale, I obtained, in succession, a fine view of Moel Hebog, Dinas Emrys, and the lakes and falls at the opening of the three valleys, all clearly yet softly illumined by moon and starlight, and gradually expanding as I approached nearer to the majestic Snowdon. Though differing in character, this view was not

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\* Among these he never for a moment forgot the primary duty of a host, having modelled his conduct, it seemed to me, on the maxims of Lord Chesterfield—especially the ‘*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re* ;’ fair speech and good bright wine ; or if you like it better—an excellent dish well served up. A breakfast, for instance—excellent tea and coffee, fresh salmon-trout hot, a fine lobster, mountain-mutton, ham, and eggs ! But it is wholly impossible, as I found it, to do justice to such a subject.

surpassed for splendour and variety by the moonlight scene I had beheld from the pass of Llanberis.

High as my expectations had been, they were at length more than realised; for the sudden view of Vale Gwynant, bursting full upon me in the radiant beauty of such a night, was one of the most wildly picturesque I had ever beheld. It seemed well denominated at the moment the Vale of Waters,—the most lovely of all Snowdon,—comprehending within itself some or other charm peculiar to all its less favoured sisters. As magnificent as beautiful, at no hour could it have been seen under a more favourable aspect—in its richest autumnal hues and softest touches of the season's fall. The majestic calm and beauty of the hills appeared mirrored in the waters at their feet, which glowed with that mellow radiance never seen by day; while afar off the music of the flashing falls alone broke on the deep solitude and silence of the night. Innumerable mild and variegated hues, caught from the serene refulgent skies, contrasted with the dusky shadows of the rocks, painting every object,—now bright, half hidden, or deeply obscured,—some changing feature continually surprising the eye. And soon, to the eastward, where the mountain begins to recede, came a bolder stream of light, through the opening which revealed the distant peaks of Snowdon, arrayed in all the richness of rainbow hues, from the deepest purple to those gray, brown, and darkening masses which invest the foreground and the base.

The streaks of dawn were just beginning to glimmer in the east, when I betook myself to a cottage in a secluded little nook at the foot of a hill; and there, for once in my life, I proved the truth, that the hardy peasant's couch is softer than any bed of down to the repose won by toil, and that no refreshment is so sweet as that offered by nature to those who know how to appreciate it.

Under no aspect can lake and mountain scenery be viewed to more advantage than in the glow of a clear autumnal night. There is something mournful in its mellow beauty and deep repose, though

full of peace, which soothes the imagination; nor are its softer lights and shadows—its dim, undefined outlines—a less pleasing relief to the eye. The emblem of a more perfect rest, however sad the thoughts it often inspires, they have that in them more consoling and even refreshing to the mind than the forced smiles or the boisterous mirth and gayeties of the world. It is the melancholy charm we feel on beholding the prison of Bonnivard from the moon-lit waters of Chillon,—the tombs of the great reformers and benefactors of our race,—or the castellated ruins which frown on us like spectres from the banks of the Rhine; it is the same feeling which attracts our steps to the spots sacred to genius or martyred worth, and one of the noblest enjoyments of travel; and it is, perhaps, derived in part from the consciousness of our transitory and imperfect being.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE GLYDER HILLS, TRIFAEN MOUNTAIN, LAKE OGWEN, JLYN IDWALL, AND NANT  
FRANGON.

HERE rivers rushing from the upland lake,  
With distant roar on rural stillness break ;  
Now slow, serene, the placid currents creep,  
Now roll terrific from the threatening steep ;  
While rills unnumbered fill the fluid train,  
And proudly roll with Ogwen to the main.

*Lloyd.*

THE next morning I pursued my excursion up the narrow vale watered by the Colwyn, and, through a wildly variegated landscape, came to the lakes near the foot of Mynydd Mawr, a vast precipice, presenting its bold, picturesque outline against the skies; it now threw its broadest shadow over hill, and rock, and vale, while the deep, clear waters of the neighbouring lakes, under the passing shadow of the clouds,—dispersing before the glowing sun,—produced a strangely varied and most pleasing effect. Proceeding on my right along the stupendous base of Snowdon, where the path to its loftiest summit first appears, I rambled towards the romantic Cwellyn,\* known to have been long in possession of a family of the same name now extinct.

Through the opening of the expansive hills, which here approach nearer to each other, the sun, pouring a richer flood of light, threw fresh lustre on every object around; and the impression,

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\* Celebrated of old for the surpassing flavour of its char ; and, like most of the lakes and streams round Beddgelert, affording admirable scope for the genius of the angler.

after the splendid night-scenes I had witnessed, was as vivid as it was dazzling to the sight. On my left rose Mynydd Mawr, wild and precipitous in its aspect—seeming yet vaster than it is, from its peculiar half-circular form. Moel Eilan, hardly inferior in majesty, but clothed in more light and verdant colours, presented no less marked a contrast; while not far beyond lay Bettws Garmon, its pretty village and antique church, where, as about Beddgelert, green slooping meadows and pleasant streams unite the milder features of landscape with the vast and sombre hills.

Returning in the afternoon to my favourite inn, I was glad to retire early to repose. The rain had wet me through during my last walk, and I now felt extremely fatigued, cold, and shivering.

The church at Beddgelert is supposed to have been erected on the site of an ancient Priory of Augustine Monks. These holy fathers, it further appears, belonged to that class of monks—assuredly the most sociable—called Gilbertines, and consisted of persons of both sexes, who resided under the same roof, divided, however, by a wall; and there is a piece of ground, not far from the spot, which still goes by the name of the Nun's Meadow. It is conjectured that the antique arched door-ways, seen on one side of the church, led to the monastery; and that the old mansion-house was the residence of the good prior, whose pious shade may yet be observed, on the eve of solemn festivals, at the head of his humbler brethren pacing the well-beaten and accustomed path.

Being desirous of obtaining admission to the interior, I looked round and observed a little hunch-backed figure, with peculiar eyes and white hair, looking intently at me, and making strong signs for me to desist in trying to unfasten one of the doors. He had a huge bunch of keys at his girdle, to which he pointed significantly, and put his hand upon his pocket, with a broad grin which said, plainer than any words, *here* is the only legitimate way of entrance. His long arms, his broad, stunted frame, and large feet and hands, with a deep voice and deformed features, brought Scott's descrip-

tion of the 'Dwarf' vividly to my mind, and this man seemed to stand before me not a whit more amiable or engaging. But his leathern belt and keys betokened his official character; and, with the proviso that he should walk before me,—for, in the sea-faring phrase, I could not fancy 'the cut of his jib,'—he brandished the church-key with an air of exultation, as if in all the joyous foretaste of clutching a sexton's fee. But I had almost as well have spared my pains and my pocket; for the interior of this loftiest church of Snowdonia, as Mr. Pennant designates it, has nothing half so conspicuous as the names of some rich pew-proprietors, ten times repeated, with a large tablet commemorating their Christian generosity in apportioning the remaining space to the use of the poor. On the east side the window, consisting of three narrow slips, gives it an antique air, and there are a few curious vestiges of fret-work. An adjoining chapel is supported by two plain pillars and gothic arches; and we are informed by Rymer, that the church originally was founded by Llewellyn, to commemorate the preservation of his son, and as some atonement for slaying his preserver, (the faithful greyhound), from whose name and tomb, tradition assures us, the village received its name. How beautifully the entire incidents to which it refers,—the noble picture of the chase,—the contrast of feelings,—the uncontrollable rage of the father against his faithful dog,—the discovery,—and the grief of Llewellyn,—have been illustrated by Mr. Spencer, in his admirable ballad, I need not here remind the reader.

My walks among the Snowdon hills are part of the most agreeable recollections of my life. Although years had elapsed since I last beheld the scenes amidst which I now wandered, the impression on my imagination was as pleasing and exciting as it had ever been. The love of coast and mountain scenery, imbibed during an early period of my boyhood, required not, in maturer years, the spell of historical association, or of yet wilder tradition, to give force to the sentiment; and if I was then an enthusiast for pedestrian rambles, I was still as eager to pursue

them for the more invigorating delight they ever afforded me, and the energy of mind and frame which, after a slight seasoning, I invariably found them to impart. I had this time twice traversed the greater mountains of this singularly picturesque region, and my desire of exploring fresh paths and trying longer excursions was unabated, till I began to think as lightly of accomplishing twenty to thirty miles before evening as I had, at one period, thought of four or five.

Even when reposing in the pleasant sequestered valleys, surrounded by the romantic mountains, breathing the deep calm which seems peculiar to the solitude of Beddgelert, the thought of a more extended route over the Glyder hills—of the fine views around the lakes Cader and Cwellyn,—and the yet wilder passes of the mountains, soon determined me to take this route towards Anglesey, in order that I might not lose the opportunity of again observing the splendid scenery round the Ogwen lake, and the dark rocky valley of Frangon.

On my way, these presented themselves to view a succession of all those nobler features of landscape which I had not before seen under the same points of view. From the summit of the Great Glyder, I marked the scenes through which I had passed on the previous days, spread on every side in novel beauty and magnificence. To the west lay the vale and extensive lakes of Llanberis; more near the barren tract of Waun Oer and the Lesser Glyder,—on one side the towering precipice of Clogwyn-du overhanging the dark Llyn Idwall, the deep fissured rock of Tllldu, the strangely indented Trifaen, the massy Carneddys of David and Llewellyn; and below the yawning chasm of Benglog opening into Nant Frangon, and the Ogwen pouring its waters into the deep glens below.

The surface of the ground upon which I stood,—the summit of the Glyder Fawr,—had a most singular appearance. It seemed as if it had been washed by a tremendous sea; the stones lay loose, and strewn at hazard as on some wild coast; the rocks, bare, clo-





THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK.





ven, and jagged, lay crossing each other in different directions; while the huge, pointed Trifaen, with its sharp, angular projections, height above height, seemed like some huge monster with human aspect strangely distorted, scowling upon the Carnedd y Gwynt, the Shepherd's Hill of Storms. And well, at the moment, appeared this desert tract of Snowdon to have been thus designated, as I marked the traces of the tempest's far and fierce career around and on all sides, with the naked peaks that reared their grey crests to the clouds. I passed the pool called Llyn y Cwm,\* and over the chilly mountain-tract of Waun Oer, through the steep, broken descent into Cwm Bochlywd, and thence to the Ogwen lake, to mark the stern character of the scenery round Vale Frangon.

No where in the region of the higher hills had I observed deeper traces of the flood and the tempest than amidst these tremendous barriers of steep rock and precipice which bid defiance to the steps of the most adventurous traveller. I was particularly struck with the bleak and stormy character of the scenery around Lake Idwall, singularly situated in a hollow of the mountain summit. Restless as the sea, and fiercely swept by the autumnal blasts, as I passed the lone and savage spot, its aspect fell chill upon the spirits, and I felt how truly the popular feeling, which seldom errs, had given to this gloomy region the marked appellations of the 'Cold Mountain Waste,' and the 'Shepherd's Hill of Storms.'

Nor has popular tradition failed to throw round it the spell of superstitious terror, of heroic adventure, and romance. The mountain tenants in passing by the hollow of the lake, and beneath the beetling precipice of Castel y Geifr—the Fortress of the Goats—carefully shun the spot infamous for the murder of the young prince Idwall by the hands of his treacherous guardian; for it is believed, that his unappeased spirit is yet heard wailing in the

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\* This small and singular lake is mentioned by Giraldus as being distinguished for its different kinds of fish,—trout, perch, &c. 'all of which,' adds the curious chronicler, 'have got no left eye.' It is rather unfortunate that this odd monocular tribe has left no living descendant to support the assertion.

storm, or throwing a darker shadow over the black precipice of Twll-du.\*

Situated in the very gorge of the craggy and beetling heights, and now restlessly heaving under the autumnal gales, which came whistling through the mountain hollows, the aspect of the lake, with the sweeping falls of the Benglog, had a strangely wild and sombre appearance, and produced a corresponding feeling in the mind. It was a combination of the picturesque and terrible, not unsuited in its sternest mood to the genius of Salvator; and had the foot of Wilson penetrated these grander recesses of the Caernarvon hills, the noble taste of that enthusiast of nature must have seized some of its features for his scarcely less divine landscapes. Here darkly rushed the river of the lake; and there the antique bridge, the wooded abyss, the picturesque coloured rocks, and the Trifaen, with its giant-semblance of the human features; and through the terrific chasm below, the Ogwen† pouring in three foaming cataracts down heights of above a hundred feet into the green spreading meadows below. No one can imagine all these wildly blending into one picture,—each calculated to rivet the eye of the true painter,—clothed in the rich variegated hues I then beheld them.

While exploring the magnificent scenery about Vale Frangon, I did not forget to mark, with the reverence due to genius and patriotic worth, the retreat of the bard of Snowdon, Rhys the

\* In other words, the Devil's Kitchen,—a horrid chasm in the centre of a tremendous precipice, extending in length about a hundred and fifty yards, nearly one hundred in depth, and only six wide. It is open in a perpendicular line to the surface of the mountain. Among the surrounding rocks may be found the following plants,—namely, *Gallium boreale*, *Plantago maritima*, *Arenaria verna*, *Adoxa moschatellina*, *Thalictrum alpinum*, *Rhodiola rosea*, *Asplenium viride*, *Polypodium phegopteris*, *Rumex digynus*, *Gnaphalium dioicum*, and in the upper part of the chasm, *Saxifraga nivalis*.

† The river and the romantic falls of the Ogwen both spring from the same lake, which is wild and picturesque in the extreme. It abounds in a peculiar and excellent kind of trout, of a bright yellow while in the water, and a fine salmon colour when drest. No where, for a short period of the season, can the angler select better sport. The bolder botanist, too, may, with equal advantage and delight, explore the region of the Glyder hills. They abound in rare plants, heaths, and mosses, and among the latter is the *Lichen Islandicus*, found so useful in pulmonary and other complaints.







Mount St. Helens



Red, the favorite companion and staunch adherent of the son of Robert ap Meredydd, one of the followers of the great Glendower, whose fortunes, through evil and through good report, he cheerfully partook.

It is situated in a deep hollow, which appears to have been thus formed by the accidental position of the falling of the adjacent rocks. The poet's muse must have been, indeed, a shrew, and his satire poignant and cruel in the extreme, to have brought an enemy upon his track into so desolate and almost appalling a sanctuary as he and his brave chieftain selected in their evil day.

I was not a little interested, also, while passing through these wilder Snowdon-hills, in comparing the bold, picturesque sketches of the enthusiastic artist with the real magnificent objects before my eyes. The subjects, especially those taken in the vicinity of the valley and lake Idwall, struck me by their faithful and characteristic delineation: and I could not mistake the sites, as I took my way into the pass and deep valley of Nant Frangon. Here I entered the road by the terrific Benglog, where the once dreadful horse-path, mentioned by Mr. Pennant, is now, by the industry and ingenuity of man, exchanged for the safe and admirable highway to Holyhead, which presents some of the grandest features of Alpine scenery.

But soon my approach towards the Menai, and the level tracts of Anglesey, reminded me of the extensive range of country that was yet to be traversed; and bending my steps down the heights, I pursued my route towards Bangor, as will further appear in another chapter.

## CHAPTER XII.

LLANDEGAI, PENRYN CASTLE, BANGOR, MENAI BRIDGE, CAERNARVON, &c.

Now twilight draws her shadowy curtain round,  
And all the landscape wears a softer hue,  
As if in grief; and e'en the plaintive sound  
Of some lone bird, who carols an adieu  
To parting day's last lingering tint of blue—  
All touch the heart, awakening pensive thought,  
And bring the absent or the dead to view  
In colours fresh, by faithful memory wrought,  
As if to cheat us with their forms she sought.

*Lady Blessington.*

IN no part of the magnificent road to Holyhead was I so much impressed with the savage and romantic character of the scenery, as in passing through the tremendous glen called the 'Hollow of the Beavers.' By descending from the road a little way, the view presented itself full of picturesque grandeur and beauty,—the lower part of the vale combining features of the splendid and the terrific. Huge masses of rock strewed the foreground;\* the green meadow overhung by lofty mountains; the bright river meandering towards the sea; the waters of the lakes rushing down the steep into their black and caverned bed, with the distant prospect, and

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\* 'In 1685, part of a rock, forming one of the impending cliffs, became so undermined by wind and rain, that, losing its hold, it fell in several immense masses, and, in its passage down a steep and craggy cliff, dislodged some thousands of other stones. The main fragment continued its motion through a small meadow, and rested on the farther side of the river Ogwen. In the winter of 1831, another part of the rock gave way, when upwards of one thousand tons fell from near the summit of Benglog, a little below the Ogwen cataracts; part rolling straight across the road fell into the valley and river in the bottom; while another part, having acquired a less momentum, rested on the road. One hundred labourers were engaged to clear the surface.'—*Hemingway.*





THE VALLEY OF THE RIVER, AND  
THE MOUNTAINS OF THE RIVER.

W. H. L. 18

1848

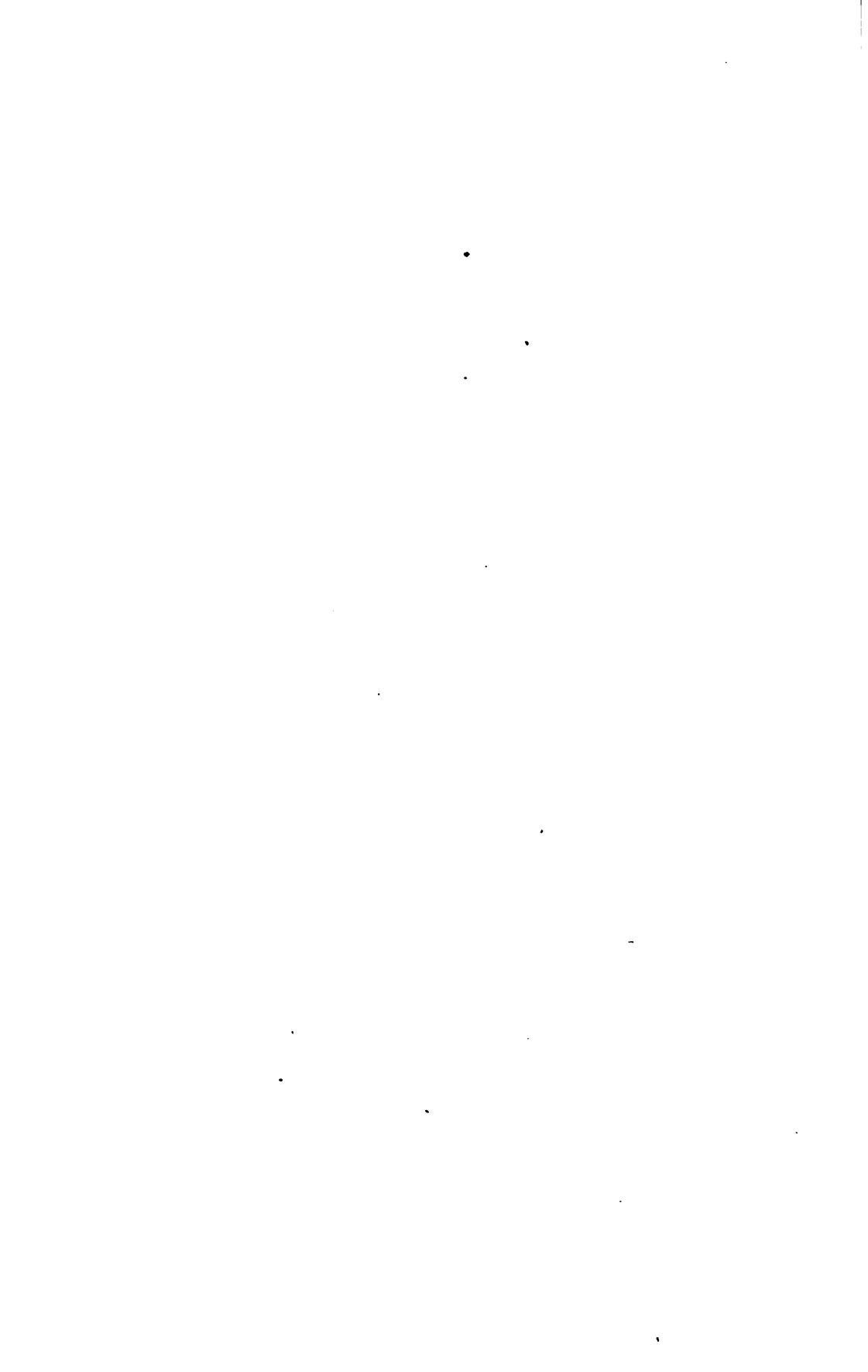




the gloomy horrors of the mountains far around me,—spite of the genius of improvement, and the triumphs of science on every side,—left upon the mind an indelible impression of this wild region of the British Alps.

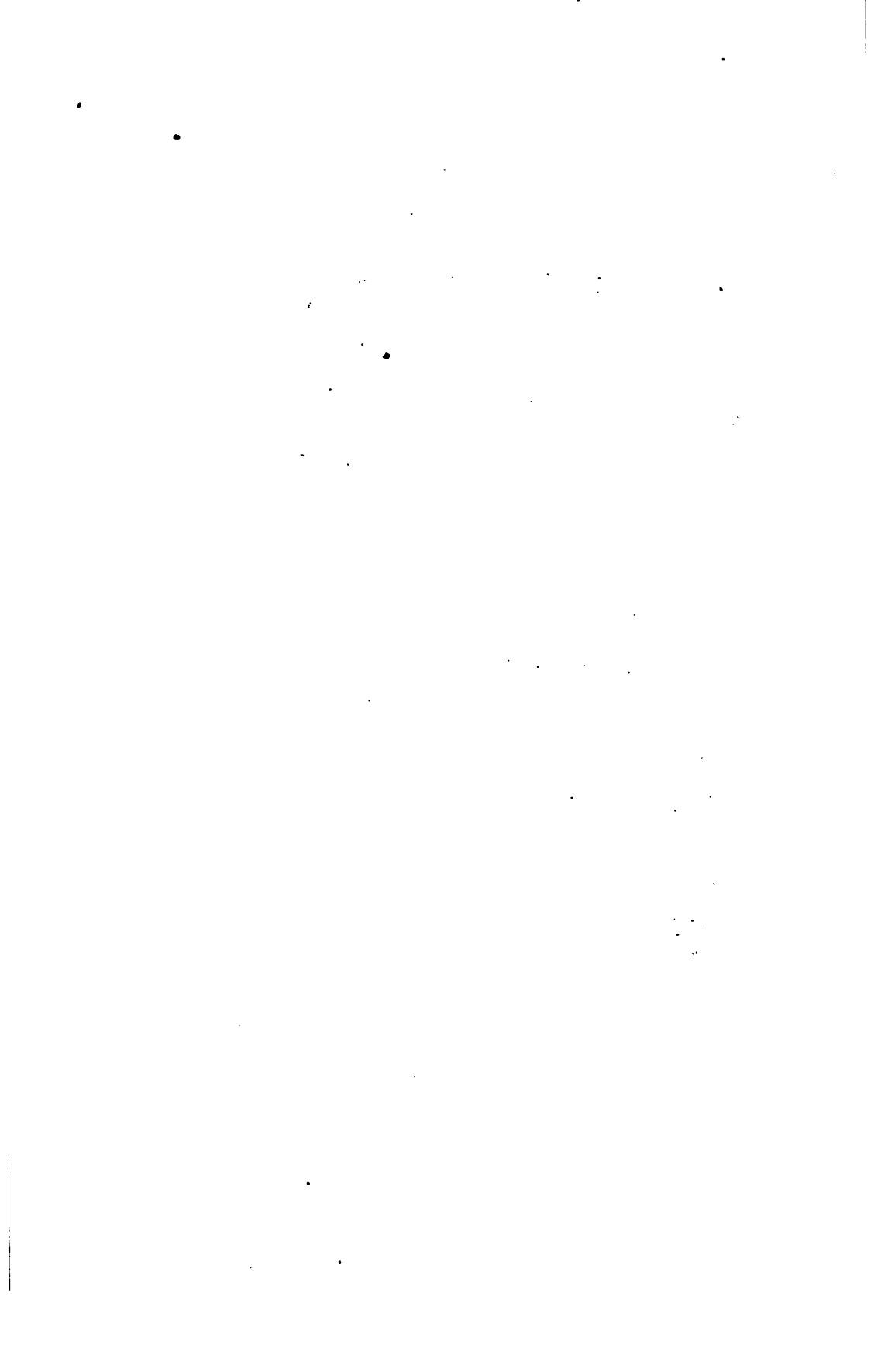
Agreeably contrasting with its more savage features, I observed the elegant mansion of Ogwen Bank, surrounded with beautiful plantations, near the rudest site of all this romantic valley. But, however bleak in external character, commerce, within late years, has in reality transformed these mountain-wastes into sources of industry, civilisation, and public prosperity. Under the auspices of the Penrhyn family, and their intelligent and noble-minded successor, Mr. Pennant, taking advantage of every new discovery, the vast property on which I now set foot had been nearly doubled in value; and I found the surrounding population, who were formerly steeped in penury and ignorance to the very lips, supplied not only with the means of livelihood but of true civilisation.

On my way along the mail road,—almost a continued descent through the Caernarvonshire hills to Bangor,—I was surprised by the rapid increase of population, houses, and villages on the line of the mountain-quarries, within the last thirty years, and by the marks of improvement and intelligence spreading on every side. One serious drawback alone presented itself, in the endless number of public houses, ‘thick as autumnal leaves,’ strewn over the labouring districts. Every other house in some places could boast its sign, from ‘Uther’s Dragon’ and ‘Prince Llewellyn’ to ‘Glendower’s Head’ and the ‘Meredith Arms,’ giving a ludicrous and grotesque appearance to the abodes, such as I could not at all admire. In a moral view, at least, these miners’ cottages, with their gaily bedaubed lures to intemperance, looked more like ‘painted sepulchres’ in the eye of reason than the dwellings of peace and labour. A mission of one or more of our new Temperance Societies would find occupation in many parts of North Wales, and in none more than among the beer-shops in the mining districts.





MAIN PLAZA.



improvement, and consequent industry and prosperity, to most Welsh towns and hamlets I had seen, bearing pleasing witness to the intelligence and public spirit of its wealthy proprietor. Penrhyn, with its sweep of new plantations, excellent roads, rising farms, and plain but commodious dwellings, with the fresh stir of life every where observable, gave evidence of a younger and happier Wales—a title better bestowed, by the combined genius of science and commerce, than the political ones of the ‘young France’ or ‘Italy.’

I stopped at one of the new-built cottages opposite a mill,—the first erected of the now flourishing villages inhabited by the fast thriving and peaceful community of this happy district—an example of how much wealth, when directed by intelligence and right feeling, can accomplish. It gave me pleasure to mark this cornerstone of the future welfare and regeneration of an extensive and populous parish, a pleasure, I may add, far higher and truer than if I had witnessed the foundation of the most gorgeous of royal palaces.

I had that afternoon passed through a succession of mountain scenery the most solitary, wildly beautiful, and magnificent,—where the towering cliffs rose almost perpendicularly to a height that baffled the eye, which now rested on objects as pleasingly contrasted, conveying feelings of relief and repose to the mind. The whole landscape blended well with the moral pleasure which the first sight of the village inspired. The sun was setting in calm and beauty; the river Ogwen murmured at my feet, and the rich valleys began to remind me of England, and its fertile tracts of wood and dale. On one side appeared Penrhyn Castle, towering boldly above the surrounding woods, with the waters of the Menai and the Anglesey hills in the distance. Upon my right, the mountains, expanding into a bold curve, brought the extreme base of Penmaen Mawr into fuller relief, while the sound of the rapid stream, rushing through the black and rugged rocks beyond, fell hoarsely upon the ear.

The princely estates of Penrhyn comprehend a large portion of the parish of Llandegai,\* which extends above fifteen miles from the straits of the Menai into the Snowdon hills. The present mansion is believed to have been erected on the site of a former palace, which belonged to Roderic Molwynog, a Prince of Wales, who flourished about the year 720. Commemorated by bards of old, as well as in modern song, the ancient palace, the castle, and more modern structure, are alike associated with interesting events and recollections.

‘ Abode of ancient chiefs, of bards the theme,  
Here princely Penrhyn soars above the stream !  
Here Cambria opes her tome of other days,  
And, with maternal pride, the page displays.’

The noble example of the late Lord Penrhyn was not lost upon its present possessor, and to the numerous alterations and improvements already made, Mr. Pennant has long been engaged in adding all that is requisite for the completion of a splendid baronial residence. The whole is conducted on a magnificent scale, in the noblest style of castellated architecture, ably blending with its old English character and appearance a study of all the modern interior accommodations and comforts. The new edifice, constructed of Mona marble, presents an extensive range of buildings, surmounted by lofty towers, some of which are circular, while the keep and another of the principal towers are square, with the additions of angular turrets. Partially screened by the surrounding woods, the effect, as you approach, is at once picturesque and imposing; and the elegant and superb character of the internal decorations, chiefly upon a ground-work of the finest marble, corresponds with its outward magnificence. The whole of the

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\* The church, it may be observed, is built in the Gothic style, having the form of a cross with a tower in the centre. It is supposed to have been erected in the reign of Edward III. Besides the monuments to the Lord Keeper and Archbishop Williams, it contains also a beautiful tribute to the late Lord and Lady Penrhyn ; the work of Westmacot.





THE RIVER AND THE CITY





accessories—the lodges and entrances to the park, with its walls and massive gateways—are on the same noble and extensive plan, comprising a circuit of not less than seven miles. An elegant chapel, hot and cold baths upon the beach, out-buildings, &c. altogether serve to convey an idea of some royal establishment, rather than the quiet abode of a wealthy commoner of Great Britain.\*

In point of situation Penrhyn Castle certainly stands unrivalled, commanding views of the bay and town of Beaumaris, Bangor, the Fryars, Baron-hill, and the greater part of Anglesey, with Priestholme Island, Ormeshead, Penmaen Mawr, and the Caernarvonshire hills.

Bangor, consisting chiefly of one long street, is not so much distinguished for the beauty of its external appearance, as for its numerous local advantages and attractions, affording a continual variety of country and sea excursions.† The prospect from Gârth Point presents a rich combination of every variety of coast and mountain scenery,—noble sea views, and landscapes picturesquely intermingled with towns and villas—castle towers and spires far and near, giving an agreeable relief to the general open character and sublimity of the prospect. On the left, the Anglesey coast, with plantations and pretty cottages—the church and castle of Beaumaris,—the noble bay covered with vessels,—the elegant seat of

\* Among the heir-looms of Penrhyn is to be seen a *Hirlas*, or drinking horn, of the hero Piers Gruffydd, in the shape of an ox's horn, ornamented and suspended by a silver chain—curious as a memorial of ancient manners. The initials of the chief's name and family are engraved at the end.

† In addition to the many interesting objects which before engaged the attention of visitors, a number of new roads and pathways have more recently been opened for the greater accommodation of the public. As regards commercial business, at the egress of the river Cegid into the Menai lies Port Penrhyn, now capable of admitting vessels of many tons burthen. The quay is upwards of three hundred yards long, and an immense tonnage of slates is shipped from it to all parts of the world.

The Penrhyn Arms, at Bangor, is a princely establishment, and with the other excellent accommodations for the public, leave nothing to be desired by the most fastidious traveller. What a contrast to the place described by Dr. Johnson!

Sir R. Bulkeley; and far to the north-east, Priestholme island, and the variegated green sea,—to the right, the Great Orme's Head stands prominent, extending its rugged bulwark into the sea at the entrance of the Menai straits and the Penmaen mountain; while to the south-east tower the hills of Snowdon,—altogether offering a *coup d'œil* singularly grand.

The cathedral of Bangor has been too often and fully described to call for much comment, being already well known to most English tourists and the readers of tours. It has nothing elegant or picturesque in its appearance. Heavy and low, it has undergone repeated rebuildings and repairs, having been subject to all the vicissitudes of war and fierce passions. The see chiefly owed its wealth and immunities to Anian, a bishop who lived in the reign of Edward I., and who appears to have been a court favourite, for he had the honour of christening the first English Prince of Wales. The loss of its temporalities, confiscated during the wars, was subsequently more than retrieved by the enormous grants of land, manors, and ferries lavishly bestowed by the Conqueror, at the expense of the vanquished chiefs and people.

From no spot can the traveller take so many varied and pleasant excursions, both by land and water, as from this antique city; and I availed myself of its admirable situation to the utmost, for exploring the beauties of the surrounding country. Within a moderate distance lie Conway, Beaumaris, Aber, Amlwch, Plas Newydd,—affording the happiest interchange of scenery,—the port, the castle, and the island,—the great quarries, and Snowdon itself,—each offering objects of interest to keep the mind agreeably employed. On foot, on horseback, or in my favourite sails about the coast, I found inexhaustible sources of pleasure, and could have given months instead of days,—had they been mine,—to Bangor and its vicinity.

The Menai straits generally present numerous objects to interest the visitor. They are not twenty miles long, yet the public are accommodated by six ferries, the widest of which is that



1847-48

THE GREAT LAKES

1847







from Beaumaris to Aber. Besides these, for general convenience, and to prevent the loss of life and delay which often occurred in stormy weather, that wonder of the world, the Suspension Bridge, was erected. The first stone was laid in 1820; one of the main chains was carried over in 1825; and it was opened in 1826. It appears considerably more than one thousand feet in length, and in height one hundred feet above high water mark. This bridge has been so often and fully described as to call for few additional remarks. It is now sufficient that the passing traveller record the impression which this magnificent proof of human ingenuity and power produces upon the eye and upon the mind. Seen, as I approached it, in the light of a clear autumnal sun-set, which threw a splendour over the wide range of hills beyond, and the sweep of richly variegated groves and plantations which covered their base—the bright river—the rocky, picturesque foreground—villas, spires, and towers here and there enlivening the prospect,—it appeared more like the work of some great magician than the result of man's skill and industry.

An intelligent tourist,\* in his 'Guide to Snowdonia,' presents the following graphic account of a visit to this monument of the genius of Telford:—'Having landed, by means of boats, upon the Anglesey side, we proceeded to the bridge, the visiting of which is a new era in the lives of those who have not before had that pleasure, and is a renewed luxury to those who have seen it again and again. Our party walked over the bridge slowly, because there was something to be admired at every step:—the effect of a passing carriage; the vibration caused even by a hand applied to the suspending rods; the depth to the level of the water; the fine view of the Straits in both directions; the lofty pillar erected in honour of Lord Anglesey; the diminutive appearance of persons on the shore; the excellence and strength of the workmanship; the beauty of the arches over the road through the suspension piers, and the

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\* Mr. John Smith.





THE CASTLE

W. K. K. K.

THE CASTLE OF THE KING



sovereign power—near the ruins of the great Roman station. The principal seat of the colony, it received its name from the river Seiont, which, flowing from the extensive lake of Llanberis, passes under the walls, and falls into the Menai not far from the castle. Of an oblong shape, it covered a space of six acres, and adjoined to it was the massive fort, which occupied not less than one acre. On two sides the walls, yet almost entire, rise to a height of eleven feet, and are six in thickness. The remains of a chapel, founded by Helen, daughter of Octavius, Duke of Cornwall, and a well bearing her name, are still among the wrecks of time, although not readily discovered even by the observant stranger.

The last Llewellyn dates from it a charter, granted to the Priory of Penmon in the year 1221; and soon after his conquest, Edward began the stupendous pile which served less to overawe the Welsh than for a magnificent ruin and a modern wonder. In 1284 a war-tax was imposed upon the people, when they seized upon the constable, Sir Roger de Pulesdon, and hanged him from one of the loop-holes. And Madoc, son of the fallen prince, showed his respect for the royal fortress by carrying the town at the point of the sword, massacring the English and setting fire to the place. King Edward in person was compelled, at the head of his army, to repossess himself of the strongest of his military stations. In 1402 it was besieged by Glendower; and was taken and held by the Parliament at the period of the civil wars. A battle was fought at Llandegai, in which the Royalists were put to the rout, and the whole of North Wales was speedily brought under the authority of Parliament.

Vast, irregular, and more shattered than its exterior grandeur would lead us to suppose, this giant-fortress stretches far along the west of the town, its broad spreading walls surmounted at intervals with octagonal towers. The extent of the courts, the gateways, and the moat, bear equal witness to those noble proportions which astonish the modern architect, as from its Eagle-turrets he commands the whole of its magnificent area, and the wide sweeping circuit of its walls.

Opposite the massive Eagle tower, in which the unfortunate Edward II. was born, is the 'Queen's Gate,'\* which had two portcullisses that communicated with a drawbridge across the moat. Over the embattled parapet are seen the turrets rising majestically above the solitary ruins, bounded on two sides by the water; the third bears traces of a large ditch; on the north-east side is a deep well nearly filled up, with a round tower contiguous to it, apparently the ancient dungeon. The exterior, and especially the main entrance, has an air of forlorn grandeur, blended with massy strength, which must, at all times, excite admiration and awe in the beholder. The area within is irregularly oblong, and appears to have been divided into an outer and inner court.

The state apartments appear to have been spacious, commodious, and handsomely ornamented; the windows wide, and enriched with elegant tracery. The form is polygonal, though the exterior of the edifice presents a complete square. The floors and staircases are already considerably injured—in many parts wholly demolished. A gallery extended round the entire fortress, to serve as a means of communication in times of danger and during a siege. It lay close to the outer walls, and was provided with narrow

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\* So called from the circumstance of Eleanor, the consort of Edward,—and who was brought, through the inclemency of a hard winter, to bear a prince for the Welsh,—having first entered the castle through this gate.

'Edward had annexed Wales to the kingdom of England, but the Welsh were displeased with this usurpation, and determined to yield no obedience to any prince but of their own nation and language. Edward thought of an expedient for cozening them. He ordered Eleanor, in the depth of winter, out of England to Caernarvon Castle, there to lie in. Edward then summoned all the barons and chief persons throughout Wales to meet him at Rhyddlan, to consult about the welfare of their country. He told the Welsh nobility that they had often wished for a prince of their own country, who might rule over them. They promised to allow of such an appointment, and to obey such a personage. Edward then mentioned *his own son Edward*, recently born, maintaining the terms of the engagement to have been strictly complied with, for his son was born in Wales, could speak no English, and his character irreproachable. Though born in 1284, it was not before he had reached his 16th year that Prince Edward received the reluctant fealty of his deluded subjects. The eldest sons of the English monarchs have subsequently been styled Prince of Wales, and, independently of birth, been created so by letters patent.'—*Nicholson*.





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slips, adapted for stations, from which to annoy an enemy with arrows or other missiles as occasion might require. But its time-worn and ivy-covered bulwarks are now fast yielding, like the interior, to the assaults of time. Some years ago the Eagle tower, struck by lightning, was split down several yards from the summit, and large masses of stone came thundering down—giving it still more the aspect of a splendid ruin.

From the summit the traveller may behold a prospect of surpassing interest and beauty,—the isle of Anglesey, with its plains, farms, and villas,—the swelling Menai,—the romantic hills,—and the blue and spacious bay, with the sea stretching far beyond.

A noble terrace, extending from the quay to the north-end of the walls, offers a delightful walk, and presents a variety of interesting objects around the port, which is daily rising into greater importance by receiving and dispensing the fruits of industry and commerce.

The harbour and the pier have both undergone very great improvement, and ships of considerable burthen can now come up along-side the quay. A patent slip for repairing vessels has also recently been laid down. There is an extensive trade carried on with Liverpool, Dublin, Bristol, &c., besides a lucrative coast trade, exchanging the invaluable mineral substances for timber and other articles. Slates are brought here as to the general dépôt from all the great Welsh quarries; and the country people of all ranks resort hither, as the best and cheapest market, from a considerable distance.

The market-house, erected by the corporation, the hotel by the Marquis of Anglesey, with hot and cold baths, a billiard room, and a number of excellent inns, render the modern town as elegant and commodious a place of residence as the most fastidious or luxurious nabob,—to say nothing of hardy Welshmen and pedestrian rambles,—could possibly desire.

## CHAPTER XIII.

HOLYHEAD, SOUTH STACK LIGHT HOUSE, BEAUMARIS, &c.

LET us go round,  
And let the sail be slack, the course be slow,  
That at our leisure, as we coast along,  
We may contemplate, and from every scene  
Receive its influence.

*Rogers.*

AFTER enjoying myself a day or two at Caernarvon, I left that retreat so particularly pleasant to the tourist, and proceeded across the silvery Menai. 'Twas morning: the mist and broad shadows were fast receding before the glories of the rising sun; the mountain sheep and cattle were creeping higher on the hills; while all nature smiled around. On turning round, upon gaining an elevated station, I observed again the range of the mighty Snowdonian mountains, which, at that moment, appeared even more majestic through the white vapours which rolled around them.

Not being able to procure any satisfactory information about the tracts along the coast, which I was desirous of exploring, I walked through a bridle-road till I came to a miserable inn, where I was dissuaded, by mention of difficulties, from my purpose of taking such a route as would present numerous marine views; and proceeded to Newborough, and over the Malldreath Sands to Llanbeulan, where I entered the high road to Holyhead.

The following morning I took a view of this remarkable town and islet, accompanied by the friend I had before accidentally met in Caernarvonshire. Following the direction of the veteran Pennant to obtain the most extensive view of it, I bent my way

to the summit of the head. At every step I observed evidences of the rapid increase and prosperity of this once poor fishing village—now spreading on every side, and supporting an active and flourishing population. From the summit we had a complete view of the promontory, and could mark its varying breadth and inequalities, and its storm-indented appearance. It was approaching the hour of high water, and I could hear the lashing of the waves upon the precipices which tower sublimely above the ocean, and the scream of the sea birds sailing around the tremendous caverns open to the waters.

Far below me lay the spacious pier on the island of Ynys Halen, with the light-house at the extremity; the harbour with its crowd of vessels and smaller craft in different stages of preparation; and close to the quay the Post Office Packet in busy preparation for immediate sail. I was struck with the singular wildness and variety of the prospect far over sea and land. The vast expanding waters—the Skerry rocks—the lighthouses, and other objects of interest, opened distinctly to the view.

After having breakfasted at the Royal Hotel,\* where I had taken up my quarters, and accompanied by my friend, I walked to the pier, and was just in time to see a fine steamer dart boldly forward, like some ocean-bird upon its wings, on her trip across the channel. There is something almost startling in looking intently on that strange unconscious power which produces the results of living motion, with a beauty, majesty, and rapidity of action, without any approach to violence or hurry. It is at such moments that the light of modern science appears almost too dazzling to the human eye. Having occasion to make some enquiries, I addressed myself to an elderly gentleman, who was standing near me, and who replied with such frank good nature and apparent intelligence, that I was induced to make myself known to him. He proved to be the Harbour Master, Captain Evans, who obligingly offered to

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\* A commodious and excellent inn, where civility, and attention, and good fare are the 'order of the day.'

show us the light-house on the pier, and promised every facility in his power for our inspecting the public works, &c. I shall not easily forget his good nature and kindness, still less the true British hospitality and obliging attentions shown me during my stay. I cannot look back to those days without an emotion of grateful pleasure, which I feel it the bounden duty of 'a Wanderer,' so kindly received by one to whom he was previously unknown, to put upon record.

My attention was next directed to a capstan of great power, for the use of His Majesty's packets and other vessels. The former have never had occasion to employ it; but many large ships, by the aid of a plentiful supply of warps, have been brought into the pier during heavy gales, evidently snatched from destruction by the prompt assistance thus rendered. On the south side of the harbour I noticed a fine graving dock admirably constructed, and one of the first in England. The bottom is convex; the drain water runs along the sides to the upper part and is pumped out by a steam engine. There was also a diving-bell vessel at work on the south pier, blasting rock under water; a most useful invention, by which all the pier wall has been erected in deep water. It is employed also in examining the chains by which the buoys along the harbour are moored, and for other equally useful purposes. The anchorage ground outside the harbour having been so much raked by use that anchors would not hold, several vessels were in consequence lost. In 1831, a very strong chain of three hundred feet in length was laid down across the entrance; so that when a vessel now casts anchor and does not hold, she drives outwards until she grapples the chain. This plan has been the means of saving a number of vessels, and none have been on shore in the harbour since it was adopted.

The two islands at the entrance are called Salt Island and Parry's Island. The former is chiefly occupied by the General Post Office,—and forms an extensive establishment for the fitting out and repairs of the mail packets. It is connected with the

main by a swivel iron-bridge, which when open leaves a passage of forty feet, and is found useful in keeping the harbour clear from any deposit of the tide, and, particularly in easterly winds, in affording egress to fishing and pilot boats. On the Salt Island, and contiguous to the Pier, are the Custom House, the Harbour Master's and resident Engineer's houses, and other respectable residences.

At the entrance to the Pier, which extends one thousand feet in length, and was built by Mr. Rennie, is a triumphal arch, raised to commemorate the visit of his late Majesty, George IV., in 1821, on his way to Ireland. The King held a levee on board the Royal yacht, and proceeded on a visit to the Marquis of Anglesey, at Plas Newydd. Being detained on his return by boisterous weather, his Majesty left the yacht, and embarked in the steam packet *Lightning*, commanded by the late unfortunate Captain Skinner, in which he proceeded across the channel. It is singular that the monument of that estimable and noble-spirited officer should now be seen not far from this very triumphal arch; and I could not pass by it, on entering the Head, without reflecting on the solemn and sudden visitations of Providence, as exemplified in his untimely end.\*

The morning was now calm, the waters smooth and bright; but I pictured to myself the advantages of the Pier Lighthouse when the storm is up,—when the glorious beacon sends forth its refulgent beams through the blackness of the tempest on the dark winter nights. It is built of Moelfrd stone, a kind of marble, on an inverted arch, its base being six feet above high water; and contains twenty lamps and reflectors, exhibiting a strong white light in every direction, elevated fifty or sixty feet above the sea. I noticed a

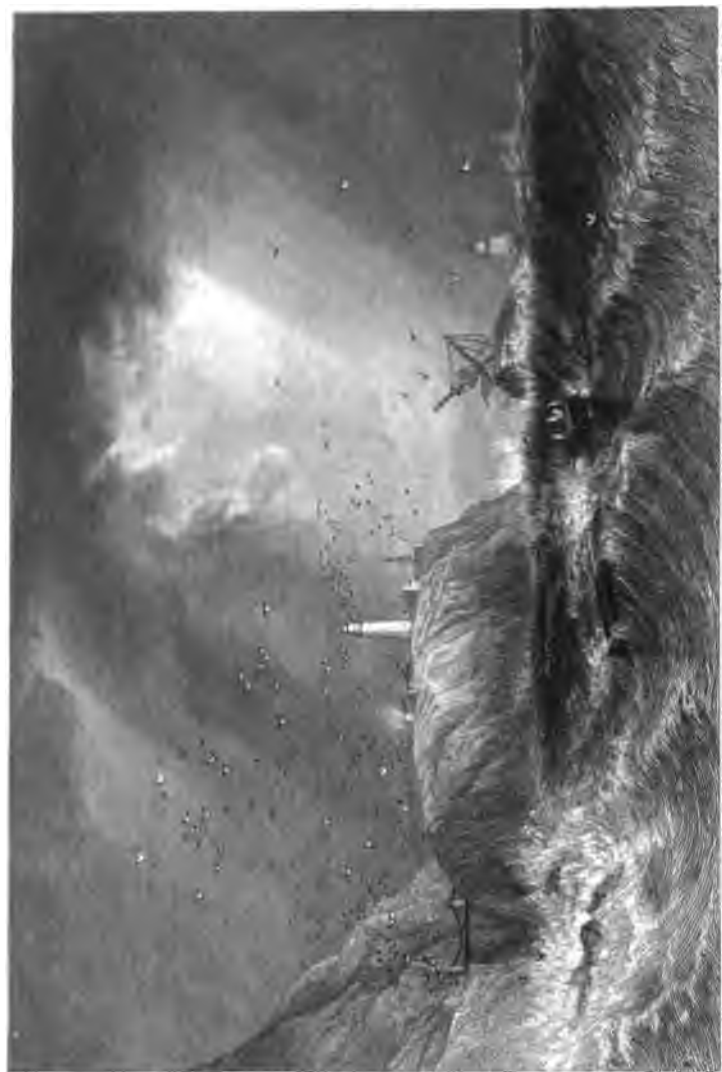
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\* That gallant officer was washed overboard, in an almost unaccountable manner, while standing on his own vessel speaking to one of the sailors, who was carried away by the same wave with his captain, and both instantly disappeared. I was informed that the weather was not very boisterous, and that the accident was one of the most extraordinary ever known in the annals of naval experience.

lamp and reflector, placed opposite an aperture twenty feet below the lantern, showing a red light. This is not seen by vessels until they have cleared all the rocks outside, when it at once appears, and the vessel alters her course, and runs for the Pier-head with confidence. No accident has happened since this light was exhibited.

I could not help observing the admirable arrangements to secure expedition in the Packet service. Scarcely five minutes now elapse, after the arrival of the mail coach, before the vessel is under weigh. Nothing can surpass the facilities for the landing and embarkation of passengers, horses, carriages, and goods. The iron crane, with which this is effected, is managed with perfect ease and safety. In thick weather the packets are guided by signal guns and bells, which are so well arranged that sometimes the Pier Lighthouse has been the first object seen after crossing the channel from Dublin. During the tempestuous weather of last winter, the London Mail, which arrives in Holyhead at eleven at night, was in no instance delayed by the packet not sailing, which was a common occurrence when the mails were conveyed by sailing packets; and such was then the uncertainty of the voyage, that passengers seldom embarked without providing sufficient stores for three or four days. Now, however, the case is very different, as the passage is accomplished in five hours and three quarters, and with such uniform regularity that the arrival of the steam-packet from Dublin can be calculated upon with as much certainty as that of the London mail coach. The Post Office authorities deserve great praise for the early introduction of steam-vessels on this station, where they were the first, I understand, regularly employed during the rough storms of the winter months, which, it was previously imagined, they were not calculated to encounter. The order and regularity with which this part of the Post Office establishment is conducted, reflect great credit upon the industry and ability of the government agent, Captain Goddard, to whom, I believe, its efficiency is chiefly owing.





W. H. H. H.

T. H. H. H.

**SOUTH-STACK LIGHT-HOUSE,**

*near Brighton*

1844





For want of a more extensive area of shelter, and deeper water, great destruction of shipping has occurred on the rocks outside, by vessels endeavouring to reach the Pier. Since 1811, thirty ships have been on shore, nineteen of which were totally lost. Yet, with the present limited space, above twelve hundred sail, of more than one thousand tonnage, exclusive of the packets, have taken shelter here during the last few years, driven in by storms and adverse gales.

A plan has been proposed to make an outer harbour, sufficiently spacious to admit merchant vessels and men-of-war at all times. This would be a grand improvement; for the bay presents a fine spacious opening, one half sheltered, with lights on each side of its entrance. It is, moreover, centrally situated in St. George's Channel, in the track of all its trade; and presents the only station from the Land's End to the Clyde, on the east side of the channel (excepting Milford), to which vessels can approach when the tide has considerably ebbed.

I trust the Commissioners will proceed with the proposed extension of the harbour without delay; for the advantages in a local and national view must be obvious to every one. It would become the asylum-port of the channel, and afford an excellent station for King's ships. Their communication with the Admiralty would be most direct, and the vessels could readily proceed to sea, either by the north or south channel. Here, too, the trade could rendezvous in time of war, and it would prove a place of protection from the enemy. But, at present, Holyhead offers the most inviting point for an enemy's attack, as most of the merchant-ships pass within a short distance of it, besides numerous steam packets, coasting vessels, and traders.

Being a fine day I determined on inspecting the South Stack,\* an insulated rock, situated about four miles from Holyhead, on

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\* 'The traveller by day, who, in his passage up or down channel, nears the eastern shores, must have observed a white tower, posted, like a sentinel, on the brow of a low hummock, apparently forming a projecting ledge from the seaward base of *Caer gybi*, or

which a conspicuous lighthouse is erected, through the zeal and ability of Captain Evans. Our little pinnacle, with its white sail, and manned by four stout seamen, was soon waiting to convey us on our cruise. The atmosphere was clear, and the weather calm, but accompanied by those sudden fresh breezes which advancing autumn brings. The boat bore off the coast to the distance required, drawing nearer the rocks, or receding at pleasure, to gain as full and varied a view of the scene as possible. In wildness and stern grandeur of aspect, no place, assuredly, can surpass this portion of the Anglesey coast. About midway of the voyage we proceeded with great difficulty; calm as it appeared, owing to the strong currents, we were soon obliged to lower sail, and take to the oars with long and strong pulls.

As we advanced, the grand promontory, with its towering, precipitous cliffs, its magnificent caverned rocks, and bleak indented sides, appeared to the utmost advantage. The effect, as we drew nearer and nearer within the verge of these tremendous caverns, was appalling. At least, when we came under the black shadows of the super-ambient rocks, and approached the dismal chasms, and heard the wild, plaintive cry of the sea-birds, wheeling above our heads, it was impossible not to feel sensations equally novel and solemn. Grand receding arches of different

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the mountain of Holyhead. On approaching still nearer, he will perceive that this hummock is, in fact, an island, torn from the main mass, but connected therewith by a link, at a distance resembling the gauze-work of a gossamer, which, in its fall, had accidentally caught upon the corresponding projections of the disjointed rocks. Let him look a little longer, and he will now and then detect minute objects passing to and fro, and come to the obvious conclusion, that this aerial pathway is neither more nor less than a connecting ladder of accommodation formed by the hand of man. The speck by night, the white tower by day, with its hummock and fairy bridge, comprise what is called the South Stack; and, taken altogether, it forms a prominent feature in the bold, romantic scenery of this iron-bound coast, and combines so many objects worthy of notice, natural and artificial, that, be the observer what he may, poet, philosopher, mechanist, or naturalist, he will find wherewithal to excite his curiosity, and reward his labour, in visiting a spot which has not many rivals in its kind in the wide world.—*Blackwood's Magazine*, Feb. 1831; 'South Stack.' (Ascribed to the Rev. Edward Stanley, M.A., F.L.S., Rector of Alderley.)

shapes, supported by pillars of rock, exhibit a strange magnificence—a wild and savage beauty, mingled with a dread repose, which continues to haunt the imagination even after quitting the scene.\* Seated among the rocks, or whirling in airy circles above and around us, I saw the various birds which seek these solitary abodes. I could not look upon them without an interest seldom inspired by the tamer species. Whether curlews, gulls, razor-bills, guillemots, cormorants, or herons, there is something wild, romantic, and eccentric in their habits and appearance, which produce ideas of solitude and freedom; for we feel that they are not our slaves, but commoners of nature. On one of the loftiest crags, I observed what I took to be a peregrine falcon,—one of those feudal warriors who has survived his fame—no longer the companion of courts and fashionables.

There are few objects more interesting than the appearance of the South Stack, when approaching it from the water. Its singularly novel aspect, its wild site and deserted air,—the lighthouse towering seventy feet in height,—the neat, comfortable buildings close under its guardian wing,—the sounds of life and industry mingled with the lashing of the sea,—and the cry of innumerable birds, ever circling above and around, were altogether of so unwonted a character, that had I been suddenly transported to the antipodes I could not have felt more unfeigned surprize. And when, having ascended its steep and rocky stairs, I gazed from the summit of the lighthouse on the wilderness of waters far around, and descending entered the quiet, pleasant retreat, which

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\* ' Here the empire of birds commences, and is continued with little interruption, though with singular selection and variety, for a considerable distance along the more inaccessible heights of the coast. One of the most singular circumstances connected with this associated location, is the absolute line of demarcation and boundary observed on both sides; each species taking a separate site, and never intruding on the appropriated districts of a neighbouring tribe. The guillemots and razor-bills nestle for the most part in their holes and corners; the gulls are scattered with rather a more latitudinarian spirit over the whole surface; while the cormorants usually sojourn on a somewhat lower range, as if more suitable to their heavy awkward flight. But most select and ascetic, as far as communication with others is concerned, are the herons.'—*Blackwood*.

the master has established here, and saw the neatness and comfort of every thing, I began to think I was perhaps only reading too abstractedly some old fairy tale. But Captain Evans soon convinced me to the contrary by introducing me to an excellent dinner, in which there was nothing dreamy or unsubstantial, though it appeared, indeed, conjured from the vasty deep! During the afternoon I amused myself in scrambling down the South Stack to the water's edge—in observing the myriads of gulls standing on the ledges of the rock, or flying about in all directions\*—in examining the suspension bridge—and scaling the towering acclivity above, from which the island and lighthouse appear but diminutive objects; while the ever varying ocean was enlivened by numerous vessels passing up or down the channel.

The suspension bridge which connects the South Stack rock with the Head, was erected in 1827, at the suggestion and under the superintendence of Captain Evans. It is over a chasm nearly one hundred feet in width, and built on the same principles as the Menai—two chain cables across, firmly fixed in the rocks on each side. It is five feet wide, and seventy feet above high-water mark. Previously, to see the lighthouse, persons were wafted over the abyss in a kind of basket, which was also used for the purpose of conveying the necessaries of life in stormy weather.

Upon our return, also, by sea, the captain pointed out the several spots where the wrecks of vessels had occurred; and

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\* 'The gulls, at the breeding season, so numerous on the island and adjacent coast, disperse themselves for the rest of the year; and are never seen congregated in great numbers, except when attracted by shoals of herrings or some similar cause; but it is positively asserted by light-keepers, as a very extraordinary fact, that they all instinctively return to the South Stack during the same night, on or about the 10th of February; and retire, with the exception of those that, having been robbed on the main, had resorted to the island to renew the labours of incubation, about the night of the 12th of August. The keepers state that, in the middle of the former night, they are warped of their arrival by a great noise, as it were a mutual greeting and cheering; adding, that they look to their return as that of so many old acquaintances, after a long absence, announcing the Winter to be over, and Spring approaching'—*Rev. Edward Stanley's Familiar History of Birds.*





D. Cox.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE.

Engraved by J. H. P. from a drawing by J. H. P.





mentioned an almost miraculous escape of a ship, which in a storm actually drove between two projecting ledges or shelves of rock, scarcely broad enough to admit a vessel without suffering injury. Now there is little dread of such an occurrence; for in addition to the excellent method of the revolving lights here adopted, the worthy captain has so placed another in a lower range of the rock as to preclude all danger, and which has been of the greatest utility. From a like motive, which seems to have actuated him through life, he favours the location and increase of the sea-birds, persuaded that their scream is known to the mariner, during thick and foggy weather, as a token of being near the shore.

I approached Beaumaris by the fine road which the public owe to the munificence of the late Lord Bulkeley. A succession of noble prospects, constantly varying as I advanced along the shore, with the distant murmur of the waves, the fresh sea-breeze, and, save when broken by the scream of the gulls and curlews, the general silence of the scene, renders the walk from Llandisilio inexpressibly delightful.

Beaumaris,\* which is the county town of Anglesey, is pleasantly situated at the entrance of the Menai Strait, which here forms a spacious bay. The castle is nearly quadrangular, with a round tower at each angle. The principal entrance faces the sea, and is formed by two circular bastion towers. This creation of Edward I., Mr. Pennant† says, was designed as a curb on his headstrong countrymen. The neighbourhood is now the resort of great numbers in quest of health or pleasure. The rides and sea

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\* Much learning and ingenuity have been shown by etymon hunters in investigating the origin of this name. One will have it to have been changed from *Bonover* (but what was the meaning of that word?) to *Beaumaris*, from *Beau*, fine or beautiful, and *marais*, a marsh. And this, considering who built it, is not improbable. Another, and I admire his idea, imagines it may have been derived from the latin *bimaris*, an epithet which Horace applies to the city of Corinth, because it was situated between two seas.

† Pennant, generally so rich in antiquarian gossip, says he was unable to collect from the family archives of the neighbourhood any thing of much value concerning this town, except that, in early times, the marsh, which is supposed to have been much more extensive than at present, was covered with fine bullrushes!

excursions are not to be surpassed; and the accommodations very superior. The houses are well built, and the town presents a neat and cheerful appearance.

In the Bay of Beaumaris, in August, 1831, the lamentable wreck of the *Rothsay Castle* steam-vessel occurred. She left Liverpool in the morning, with upwards of one hundred and thirty souls on board. The weather being boisterous, the vessel made but little way, and, towards evening, the sea running high, the passengers entreated the captain to return, offering to relinquish their fares, but he stubbornly refused. The *Rothsay* reached Little Ormshead at eight o'clock, and was off Great Ormshead at ten, being two hours in making four miles! Here the leakage increased with alarming rapidity—the cabins began to fill—the vessel lurched heavily—and the passengers were soon required to relieve each other at the pumps. They were then ten miles from Beaumaris, but gained the entrance to the Menai Strait about twelve o'clock, when their appalling situation soon became apparent by the sea entering the engine-room and nearly extinguishing the fires. Shortly afterwards the steamer struck on the Dutchman's Bank, when the consternation and horror of the passengers must have surpassed any description.

A gentleman on board, Mr. Tinne, gives the following heart-rending particulars:—I felt a shock as if the vessel had grounded; all seemed a scene of confusion, and there was no obtaining information about what had happened. Shortly, however, she began to strike both fore and aft, and at last we were completely aground, and almost incapable of advancing. The concussions continued, as if warnings of our impending fate, and our alarm kept pace with these dismal forebodings. I was going into the cabin, but found the way stopped by ladies sitting on the steps. I therefore returned to one of the benches on the poop,—two or three ladies being beside me, much agitated. The gentlemen were then ordered forward, with a view to lighten the vessel astern, while the engine was kept working; each stroke of the

wheels, however, seemed like the expiring ticking of a watch, and we made no way. I succeeded a person in ringing the bell. This station I occupied for twenty minutes or more. The individual who succeeded me, however, lost the tongue, and they were then obliged to take a piece of wood instead of it: the feelings of despair which I thought actuated this, sunk deeply into my soul; and, low as each rap was, it sounded like the death-knell of us all. They were labouring hard at the pumps, and calling to be relieved. I went several times forward, and once in the hurry fell down the trap-door of the engine-room, but saved myself from going through. The anxiety of the moment did not allow me to think of pain. The captain was mostly, I believe, in the bow of the vessel. The last time I noticed him, he was standing perfectly motionless, with one hand on the windlass, and he appeared looking out a-head. The water was now washing strongly over us, and I had some difficulty in regaining a place in the larboard corner of the poop. There was a rush at this time towards the boat; but those who had got into her came out again, for they were told that she could not live in such a sea, that she had a hole in her bottom, and there were no oars. I now threw off my clothes, leaving only my waistcoat, shirt, stockings, and drawers; and of these latter, also, I soon afterwards divested myself. I looked at my watch, and found it within a quarter of two. It was dark; thick, black clouds were flying about the sky—and only one bright star could be seen, reflected on the troubled sea.'

'Fathers beheld the hastening doom with stern delirious eye;  
Wildly they looked around for help—no help, alas, was nigh!  
Mothers stood trembling with their babes, uttering complaints in vain;  
No arm but the Almighty arm might stem the dreadful main!  
Jesu, it was a fearful hour!—the elemental strife  
Howling above the shrieks of death, the struggling groans for life!'

Afterwards the vessel laboured excessively, and some parts gave way, when she speedily filled with water, and rolled and pitched violently. Mr. Adshead says:—This was the limit of her fearful

career : she struck again, with tremendous force, and her fragile shell-work, which had previously given way through the insufficiency of its fastenings, was torn asunder by the mightier shock, leaving ample space for the fierce gush of waters in every direction; and she soon lay a helpless wreck, clogged by the fatal indraught, 'staked by the weight of her engine and apparatus to the sand,' and surrendering human victims to almost every wave that shattered her. Fearful and heart-rending was the unequal conflict ! The young man was cut off in his strength ; the maiden in the flower of her age ; the matron perished with the child, and the veteran with the youth ; the rich fell under the stroke which cut down the poor ; the priestly character suffered with the man of the world—all were swept away in indiscriminate union, and found, in one mingled mass, a common grave.

' Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell,  
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave,  
Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,  
As eager to anticipate their grave.

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And first one universal shriek there rush'd,  
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash  
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd,  
Save the wild wind, and the remorseless dash  
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,  
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.'





Sunset from the ship "The Great Eastern"  
 near Japan

1854





## CHAPTER XIV.

ABER, PENMAEN MAWR, CONWAY, LLANRWST, &c.

‘ WHERE’ER we gaze, around, above, below,  
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found!  
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,  
And bluest skies that harmonize the whole!  
Beneath, the distant torrent’s rushing sound  
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll,  
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul.’

AFTER visiting with a garrulous cicerone the few curiosities of Beaumaris, which I shall not now pause to describe, I proceeded towards the ferry. The place of embarkation, which lies near the town, is a point of land anciently denominated *Penrhyn Safnes*, but afterwards ‘Osmund’s Air,’ from a malefactor there executed, and who, on his way to the fatal spot, jocosely observed he was only going to take the air. Among the passengers in the ferry boat, was a drover, proceeding on business to Aber. This man was, in his way, a great traveller; he had been at Liverpool, Birmingham, and Manchester; and first and last had had great dealings with the Saxons over the border; yet his *Sasnag* was not over abundant. In fact, he spoke a jargon in comparison with which the Doric of the Highlands might be regarded as clear and intelligible. Though a pig-drover, he was a great patriot; that is, he thought everything Welsh superior to whatever of similar kind could be found in any other country. In his opinion there was no good ale on the wrong side of the Dee; the very pigs, he averred, were in England more scraggy and long-legged than in *Cymry*; and, looking with an arch grin at Penmaen Mawr, which towered magnificently

above the bleak, rocky shore, 'There!' said he, pointing with his finger at the huge mountain, 'has she any hills like that in her country?'

No one can have visited a country abounding like Wales with magnificent scenery, without wishing for a vocabulary varied and rich as the landscape.—Before me, stretching from right to left, far as the eye could reach, rose a chain of peaks, connected at their bases by a curtain of rocks and lower ranges, and presenting an aspect truly Alpine; but language supplies no expressions that could paint the effect of the whole assemblage upon the mind.—As Mont Blanc among the Savoyard glaciers, so towers Snowdon above the surrounding heights, luminous, yet variegated in hue, clothed with ærial tints, and often almost transparent as a cloud.

Having accomplished the traject of the narrow frith, we walked across the Levan Sands to Aber. Our pig-drover, who was perfectly acquainted with the localities, here acted as our guide, and his knowledge was of real value to us; for since the sands shift continually, they are not to be traversed without considerable danger. When the thick fogs of autumn or winter lie upon the ground, the great bell of the village, presented for the purpose, as he informed us, by Lord Bulkeley, is constantly rung, as a signal to direct the footsteps of persons landing from Beaumaris.

It appears that, many years ago, the site of the present Levan Sands formed a well-cultivated and inhabited tract of land, and that the sudden advance of the ocean swept away the people and cattle of the district in one overwhelming flood. Tradition is here assisted by the remaining works of industry and art. At low ebbs, Pughe, in *Cambria Depicta*, says, ruined houses are yet to be seen, and a causeway, pointing from Puffin Island to Penmaen Mawr, which is easily visible. The boatman placed me right over it, and keeping the boat's head to the tide, enabled me to examine it well; but though apparently near, the man said it could not be less than two fathoms deep.

Aber is a small rural hamlet, situated at the entrance of a deep





L. Cor

Illustration of the scene at the mouth of the river





glen, which, running directly inland into the heart of the mountains, is bounded on one side by the stupendous hill, called *Maes y Gaer*, whose grey surface is partly bare, partly hidden by trees. Down the steep declivity of the mountain, that closes the extremity of the glen, a cataract of vast height precipitates itself, which has not without reason been compared to the Staubbach in the valley of Lauterbrunnen. In the mouth of the defile, near the village, stands a great artificial mound, the site in other days of one of Llewellyn's palaces. Many years ago, some antiquarian, by excavating for the purpose, discovered several of its massy substructions.

On quitting Aber, I pursued the road following the sweep of the shore towards Penmaen Mawr, whose rocky, precipitous base, running out in a bluff promontory, projects into the waves. In the course of the afternoon, while pausing on an eminence to contemplate the features of the landscape, I beheld at a distance a vast rainbow, bending like an arch over the sea, whose cerulean pinnacles, now tinged with purple, it seemed to embrace within its mighty span. It was a glorious spectacle. The contrast of the many-coloured bow with the dark waters, the sparkling clearness of the sky above, the brightness of the sunshine resting on the surrounding hills, and the various features of the nearer scenery, formed altogether so magnificent a scene, that even the traveller in the grander regions of the Valais or Savoy can seldom witness anything more sublime.

It was towards nightfall when I approached that part of my journey where the road, hewn out of the solid rock, was like a terrace midway along the face of the mountain, many hundred feet above the sea, which breaks in thunder below. The evening was mild and beautiful. Clouds, slightly charged with lightning, hung over sea and land; and, from time to time, bright flashes, unaccompanied by thunder, kindled the firmament, showing momentarily the form of the clouds, and gleaming over the face of the ocean. Occasionally the eye caught by this transient light glimpses of the black, beetling rocks overhanging the road, communicating to them

a gloomy grandeur of character which I should in vain endeavour to describe. Formerly, before the genius of Sylvester had discovered the means of widening the road and defending it with a parapet, this passage of Penmaen Mawr was full of danger.\* But, though terrific, it is now perfectly safe; unless we contemplate the possibility of the rain or frost detaching, as it sometimes does, vast rocky fragments of the superincumbent mountain, and hurling them headlong upon the helpless traveller. Ideas of such catastrophes naturally enough present themselves in such situations to the mind; it was therefore not without pleasure that I found myself beyond the possibility of danger.

Correctly speaking, this great mountain promontory has two divisions, one of which is called Penmaen Mawr, the other Penmaen Bach; but the whole is generally known to the tourist by the former name. Less than a century ago, a narrow zigzag path, along the side of the rock, was the only convenience for travellers. Many accidents consequently occurred, which induced the Legislature, in 1772, to assist in forming the present grand terrace, which has more recently been further enlarged and improved under the direction of Mr. Telford. It is well guarded on the sea side, and many of the overhanging fragments of rock have been blasted.

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\* Pennant observes, that 'a vein of crumbling stratum in one part so contracted the road as to excite new horrors.' But the breach, he adds, 'is now effectually repaired by a series of arches; a work the just admiration of travellers.' Here, during the latter part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, numerous accidents happened, some of which, in his pleasant way, he relates:—'I have often heard,' says he, 'of an accident, attended with such romantic circumstances that I would not venture to mention it, had I not the strongest traditional authority, to this day in the mouth of every one in the parish of Llanvair Vachan, in which this promontory stands. Above a century ago, Siôn Humphries of this parish paid his addresses to Ann Thomas of Creyddin, on the other side of Conway river. They had made an appointment to meet at the town of Conway. He in his way fell over Penmaen Mawr; she was overset in the ferry boat, and was the only person saved out of more than fourscore. They were married, and lived very long together in the parish of Llanfair. She was buried 1744, aged 116. He survived her five years, and was buried 1749, close by her in the parish churchyard, where their graves are familiarly shown to this day.'





THE BAY OF LONDON





From the late hour at which I arrived at Conway, the features of the country were invisible to me. On entering the town, where not a light streamed from any cheerful lamp on shore, or ship in the harbour, the idea at first suggested itself that I was entering a deserted city; but, on turning into the broad street leading to the Market-place, the gleam of candles from sundry bed-rooms, and the snarl of several curs, convinced me I was in the land of the living. Luckily the inmates of the Castle Hotel had not all retired to rest, so that I speedily quieted the cravings of hunger. This inn has been rebuilt and rendered very commodious and comfortable since I visited Conway some years before.\*

Our older tourists have remarked, that, like a painted sepulchre, Conway is all beauty without, and all ugliness within; and I am sorry I must corroborate their testimony. But the site of the town, on a steep declivity descending to the margin of the river, here nearly a mile in breadth, is in itself extremely fine; and its majestic castle presents from a distance an aspect of singular grandeur. Formerly a curtain, terminating in a round tower, ran out from either end of the town walls into the river, to impede the approach of an enemy by water; but of these one curtain only now remains, the other, with both towers, have long since yielded to time. From the quay is seen a noble view up and down the river, and over the contrajacent country, broken up into swelling hills, and beautified with woods and villas.

The castle, built in 1284, under the eye of Edward I., by the architect, it is supposed, whom he employed in the erection of Caernarvon, is very justly regarded as one of the most beautiful

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\* "The approach to Conway from the Denbighshire side is along a new-made terrace or breakwater, advancing across the greater part of the river's breadth, and, of course, confining the rapid stream to very narrow limits, on the Caernarvonshire side. From this terrace the Chain-bridge appears to be the grand entrance, under triumphal arches, to the Castle itself; and although, on coming close to that venerable structure, there is a sudden turn from it, leading directly to the town, I fancy a party of travellers will never regret, that, instead of being deposited within the naked and roofless walls of the Castle, they are handed into a comfortable parlour at the Castle Inn.—*Smith's Guide to Snowdonia.*

fortresses in a country distinguished for the splendour and magnificence of its military structures. Though more extensive and better preserved, it somewhat resembles the castle of Falaise in Normandy. Its base, however, is less wooded, and there is no brawling streamlet leaping, as there, from rock to rock at its foot; but, instead, a broad, majestic river and a creak, full at high water, sweep round two of its sides. The other two face the town. Within the walls are two spacious courts; and the external sweep of the fortifications contains eight lofty towers, each with a slender turret, singularly graceful and elegant in form, springing from its summit.

Notwithstanding its grandeur and importance, this castle makes no great figure in history. Soon after its erection, the Royal founder was besieged in it by the Welsh, and the garrison nearly reduced to an unconditional surrender by famine. Finally, however, they were extricated from their perilous situation by the arrival of a fleet with reinforcements and provisions. In 1399, Richard II., then in Ireland, commanded the troops raised in his behalf against the haughty Bolingbroke, to assemble at Conway,—and their numbers were considerable; but the vacillation and feebleness of purpose of that monarch induced many of them to abandon him on his arrival. Yet the remainder was still sufficient to have made head against the usurper, had not the King, who feared to fight his own battles, basely abandoned his followers, and rushed blindly into the snare laid for him by his enemies. During the Civil Wars, Conway Castle was at first held by Archbishop Williams for the King; but the warlike churchman, being superseded by the savage Rupert in the command of North Wales, went over in dudgeon to the Republican party, and personally assisted the gallant General Mytton in the reduction of the castle. While the Republic flourished, this noble fortress was suffered to retain all its ancient grandeur undiminished; but on the restoration, a grant having been made of it, by the Stuart, to the Earl of Conway, its new possessor ordered his agent to remove the timber,

iron, lead, and other valuable materials, and send them to Ireland, ostensibly for his master's service, though it is generally supposed they were converted to his own use.

In the interior, the magnificence of the great hall corresponded with the grandeur of its outward appearance. It was one hundred and thirty feet in length, and spacious in its other dimensions; and the roof was supported by eight arches, of which six only remain. Two large fire places, one at the further extremity and the other in the side, warmed the apartment; and nine windows, six of which command a prospect of the country, still admit light upon its ruins. Two entrances, both contrived for security, conducted into the fortress; one by winding narrow stairs, up a steep rock, from the Conway, and terminating in a small advanced work before one of the castle gates, covered by two round towers; the other towards the town, protected by similar works, with the addition of a drawbridge over a broad moat.

Of the town of Conway little need be said. The houses, as in most other Welsh towns, are mean and low, and dingy in colour. Since the erection of the Suspension bridge, by Mr. Telford, however, (which has taken the place of Charon and his ferry-boat) and the consequent facilities of approaching the place from Denbighshire, the condition of the inhabitants has begun to improve, and the improvement of their dwellings will necessarily follow. This bridge, constructed on the same principle as that of the Menai, though on a smaller scale, presents an appearance singularly elegant, lying at the foot of the antique castle, and surrounded by scenery of the most picturesque description. It is three hundred and twenty feet in length between the supporting towers, and eighteen feet above high-water mark. The chains on the western side pass upwards of fifty feet under the castle, and are fastened in the rock on which it is built.

The church, though ancient, contains scarcely anything worthy of notice, except the following inscription, engraved on a stone in the nave of the building, which, though found in Pennant and

other tourists, is so curious as to deserve repetition: 'Here lyeth the body of Nicholas Hooke, of Conway, gentleman, (who was the forty-first child of his father, William Hooke, Esq., by Alice, his wife,) the father of twenty-seven children, who died the 27th day of March, 1637.' In the market-place is an old building called *Plas Mawr*, which was erected more than two centuries ago. It is deserving the notice of the antiquarian. The town is surrounded by a very thick wall, strengthened by twenty-four towers, most of which remain in tolerable preservation.

The pearl fishery of the Conway was celebrated even in the time of the Romans; and, according to the elder Pliny, Julius Cæsar, returning from his marauding expedition into Britain, from whence, as Tacitus observes, he was beaten out, dedicated, in one of the temples at Rome, a breastplate, set with British pearls, probably from this fishery. It is stated, but I know not how truly, that a considerable trade is still carried on in the pearls found in the bed of the Conway and on the adjacent coast. These pearls are supposed to be equal in size and colour to any found in Great Britain. Some years ago, Sir Robert Vaughan appeared at court with a button and loop in his hat crusted with Cambrian pearls.

Having a desire to see the splendid marine views which I had been informed are presented from the Great Orme's Head, a lofty promontory,\* which projects into the Irish Sea, and forms the

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\* 'About seven or eight years since, the brig *Hornby*, bound from Liverpool to South America, with a cargo of dry goods valued at upwards of £60,000, was driven from her course by a heavy gale; and, about midnight, was dashed against the rugged front of the Great Orme's Head, and instantly sunk. One of the crew happened at this terrible moment to be out upon the bowsprit, in the act either of loosing or taking in the jib, and he was flung by the concussion upon a narrow shelf of the rock, where he lay for some time stunned and confounded; but at length, exerting that mechanical energy which providence beneficently supplies for self-preservation, even in the total absence of consciousness, and which sometimes achieves more than deliberation would dare to attempt, he succeeded in getting to the top of that frightful precipice, and crawled to a smithy at a little distance, where he was found at five o'clock in the morning by some workmen employed there, in connection with a neighbouring copper-mine. He told his melancholy story, but was







26. W. A. H.



eastern entrance to Beaumaris Bay, I strolled thither one fine morning, passing near the ruins of the ancient Castle of Diganwy, and, by turning to the right a little out of my way, the estate called Gloddaeth, on which is a mansion erected by Sir Roger Mostyn, in the reign of Elizabeth. It is a delightful place. Proceeding onwards over slippery downs and limestone rocks, I reached Llandidno Church, which serves the purpose also of a beacon; and thence scaled the highest point of the Great Orme's Head, where the prospect is said to be very extensive in clear weather; but I was disappointed in my expectations, as a light mist hung over the sea. This great rock is inhabited by myriads of sea-birds, who are secure from molestation in the steep and inaccessible crags.\* On returning to Conway by the Little Orme's Head, I entered Denbighshire, and traversed a small but lovely vale, richly wooded, and embosomed in swelling hills. A small stream, which unites, at some distance below, with the Conway, meanders fantastically through the hollow, tempting the angler from his road; and its course, sometimes visible, sometimes concealed by golden copses, conducts the eye up the vale until it is lost among the hills.

On quitting Conway, the weather, as it had been during the greater part of my journey from Holyhead, was extremely beautiful; and the rich autumnal tints which had already settled on the landscape, rendered every feature of the country doubly interesting.

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laughed at by his incredulous auditory; for he could only say that he had climbed up the horrid steep which had wrecked the vessel; how he knew not, and the thing appeared impossible to those acquainted with the place. At day-light, however, (for it was winter) portions of a wreck were discovered near the spot, and the truth of the man's story was shortly after made apparent. No other individual of the Hornby's crew, or thing belonging to her, was saved.'

\* Proposals have recently been made for making a large harbour between the Great and Little Orme's Heads, which form promontories of gigantic height, stretching out into the channel, leaving a sort of horse-shoe bay between them upwards of a mile in width, capable of floating at low water a thousand sail. The Great Orme's Head would, it is said, shelter the bay from westerly gales, and the lesser one form an efficient barrier against the easterly blast. An extensive breakwater is also contemplated from east to west, leaving sufficient space for the ingress and egress of vessels.

On my left the Denbighshire hills, covered with heath and gorse in flower, threw their broad shadows over the stream and valley; while the towering mountains of Caernarvonshire, appearing in the distance towards the right, presented a resemblance to the Alps as beheld from the fertile plains of the Milanese.

As I advanced, all the beauties of the lovely vale of Conway burst in succession upon the eye; and I would fain record the feelings of delight which those autumnal landscapes, steeped in the richest hues of poetry, gave birth to in my mind. Now a gentle rising in the road concealed every object but the activity before me from the view; now I reached the summit, and paused to admire all that variety of hill and dale, and rock and stream, and forests of green and gold, that lay stretched out like a map around; anon I passed rapidly down the steep, smitten at every step by the fairy changes of the scenery. Several small streams, whose sources lie far above in lakes and lonely turns among the mountains, were traversed in the course of the morning; and at each of these I caught glimpses of lovely combs and valleys, that wind and mount, till lost to the sight between the foldings of the hills.

There being nothing to detain the traveller at Caerhun or Tal y bont,\* I hastened forward, leaving Llanbedr on the right, and, early in the afternoon, arrived at that point of the road where those who visit Llanrwst must make a sharp angle to the left, and pass the Conway into Denbighshire. The bridge, constructed

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\* 'Between Tal y bont and Pont Dolgarrog is a nameless stream which, issuing from Llyn Geirionedd, falls, at this part of the road, into the Conway. In precipitating itself from the mountain ridge, this stream forms a magnificent cascade, of which Mr. Bingley gives the following description:—'I ascended, says he, along a winding path which, after about a quarter of an hour's walk, conducted me to the bed of the river, near the station from whence it was to be seen to the greatest advantage. The scene was highly picturesque. From the upper part two streams descended at some distance from each other. The range of rock, down which the water was thrown, was very wide, and extremely rude, being formed in horizontal ledges into deep clefts and enormous chasms. On the various lodgements of the rocks were numerous pendant shrubs. The dark shades of the clefts, and the irregular brilliancy of the prominent features of the scene, from the reflected rays of the sun, contrasted again with the foaming of the water, were truly grand. The colours of the rock, which were everywhere, also, very dark, were rich and highly varied.'

from the designs of Inigo Jones, (who, though born in London, was by descent a Welshman,) consists of three arches, the central one fifty-nine feet wide, the others much narrower.

Standing on the centre of the bridge, I enjoyed a splendid view up the river, which, in this direction, makes no bend for a considerable distance. Here, in the fishing season, may be seen great numbers of coracles, those *vitilia navigia*, or light boats, which, in the shallower streams of this country, supply the place of the *monoxula*, or canoes fashioned out of a single tree, that in the larger rivers, as in Greece and other countries, formed the first step towards a navy. A specimen of this singular kind of canoe, in which our ancestors fought against their more civilized enemies, may now be seen in the colonnade of the British Museum, with its benches and low bulwarks, almost complete. Here great quantities of salmon are taken; and, in the months of February and March, great numbers of smelt. The flow of the tide reaches no nearer than Trefriw, a mile and a half distant, to which place boats of twelve tons burden sometimes make their way.

The town of Llanrwst, which Pennant describes as small and ill-built, has, since his time, increased in size and improved in appearance. Twenty-five years ago, the Rev. Mr. Evans gave 2549 as the number of its inhabitants, which has now increased to 3601; and, in proportion as the population has augmented, evidences of superior taste and attention to comfort have become visible. From its central situation in a busy and thriving district, distant from any other mart, it has been enabled to monopolize the trade of the neighbourhood. It was formerly famous for its cattle fairs, and peculiar manufacture of Welsh harps; but the branches of industry chiefly cultivated at present are the spinning of woollen yarn, and the knitting of stockings.

There is nothing within the town particularly worthy of notice. The church may be visited by those fond of seeing mutilated monuments and tombs. Like many other religious structures of the darker ages of Christianity, its erection is connected with a tale of

blood. The ground it stands on, according to tradition, was given by Rhun ap Nefydd Hardd, in expiation of the murder of Idwal, son of Owen Gwynnedd, cut off by Nefydd, his foster-father, to whose care he had been entrusted. In the interior of the church is some curious carving, said to have been brought from the neighbouring abbey; and the Gwydir Chapel, erected in 1633, by Sir Richard Wynne, from the designs of Inigo Jones, may, though neglected, be considered as another ornament. On the wall, nearly crumbling to dust, is an old monument, ornamented with trophies, designed to commemorate the ancestors of the Gwydir family.

But very little, after all, of the attraction of the place consists in churches or bridges. It is by the charms of nature, which man may indeed diminish, but can never destroy, that the traveller is led to visit Llanrwst. Here are concentrated, within an extremely narrow compass, a thousand elements of the picturesque, combined with all the cunning of nature's hand into an endless succession of pictures,

‘Ever varying, ever new!’

Far as the eye can reach, hills towering behind hills, each differing from the other in aspect and outline, appear to blend and intermingle their summits, till the aerial peaks of the most remote seem to unite with the sky, which they resemble in colour. Feathering the nearer cliffs, and climbing along the precipitous ascents of the bolder ranges, are dense forests, which were now tinged by autumn's hand with the gorgeous colours with which the year loves to conceal its decline. Similar woods line both banks of the Conway, and hang, as if in fondness, over their own majestic reflections slumbering upon its waters. Here, long sweeps of the noble stream glitter in the sun—there, broad masses of shadow darken its waters, or thick groups of trees altogether conceal it; while farther, above and below, the eye catches further glimpses of its majestic course, flowing along its green banks, in one part covered with light barks, in others solitary and silent as the rivers of some new continent. I am sensible, however, how vain it is to





W. R. 1846

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WALL OF THE MOUNTAINS

Print





attempt, with the imperfect colours of language, to depict so lovely a scene. Every person who has beheld it must be aware that, in such cases, even the most inspired pencil must fall short; and, therefore, it will excite the less surprise if words are found unequal to the task. Burke, who, at some period of his life, passed this way, pronounced Llanrwst the most charming spot he had seen in Wales; and though authority, particularly in matters of taste, goes but a short way with me, I must, on this point, reecho his dictum, which, without disparagement to the Vale of Clwyd or Llangollen, I consider to be founded in truth.

My next ramble was to the higher part of the estate of Gwydir. Mr. Aikin passed some high encomiums on the sylvan and romantic scenery of this neighbourhood, which I found were not exaggerated. Majestic forest trees mingled their leaves with the birch, mountain ash, fir, or luxuriant underwood that clothed the eminences. Having climbed near the highest elevation, an extended landscape burst upon the view. It was the vale through which the river Llugwy rolls with impetuous force till it joins the Conway, near Bettws y Coed. Below me, on the left, lay this pretty village—in front, the valley, rich in foliage, displaying every variety of tint. Occasionally the foaming Llugwy showed itself through the exuberant trees lining its banks. The mail road to Holyhead runs nearly parallel with it the whole of its extent. In the extreme distance, on the left, rises the great mountain of Moel Siabod; beyond which, in the centre, the purple peaks of Snowdon are distinctly visible; while to the right, as if to enhance the grandeur of the scene, tower the Glyder hills. The sun beamed brightly in the heavens, and all seemed quietude and peace in this sequestered spot. The pencil of the artist can never portray, nor the pen of the author describe, the impression produced upon the imagination by the glorious scene.

The neat white-washed cottages of the hardy inhabitants of this mountainous district are scarcely observable until the pedestrian approaches close to them. At one, near which is the best view

up the valley, the singular custom, which I had before noticed in Wales, of blowing through a cow's horn, to call the labourers to their meals, startled me, but I soon regained my self-possession on turning towards the cottage, when I discovered the innocent cause of my surprise. This secluded and delightful spot brought to my recollection the invitation of Petrarch, when at Vacluse, to Cardinal Colonna. 'If you prefer the tranquillity of the country to the noise of the town, come here and enjoy yourself. Do not be alarmed at the simplicity of my table, or the hardness of my bed. Change of scene is always pleasing; and pleasures, by occasional interruption, frequently become more lively. I promise to provide you with a bed of the finest turf, a cooling shade, the music of the nightingale, and water drawn from the freshest springs; and, in short, every thing that the hand of nature prepares for the lap of genuine pleasure.'

On returning I passed by a small waterfall, and varied my route towards the northern part of Gwydir. Presently the vale of Llanrwst, with the Conway meandering through the whole extent, presented itself. Descending the side of a steep hill covered with immense grey rocks, occasionally varied by heath and fern, seldom, I apprehend, visited by human footsteps, I soon found myself on the well-known old bridge over the river Conway. A solitary angler was pursuing his favourite amusement along the banks of the sparkling stream, which

'Makes sweet music with the enamell'd stones,  
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;  
And so by many winding nooks he strays  
With willing sport.'

While a young artist, probably desirous of fame, was studiously portraying the enchanting objects around.

The varied scenery observed in the walk from hence to Bettws y Coed, must render it particularly attractive to all who can spare a day when visiting that village or the town of Llanrwst. Pursuing





VIEW OF THE MOUNTAINS NEAR THE FALLS OF THE RHINE

1840





the new road, which presently joins that leading to Bangor, I came to the Waterloo Bridge, consisting of a single arch of cast-iron, upwards of one hundred feet in span; there is an inscription on the main rib, which informs the passer-by that it was erected the same year the battle of Waterloo was fought. Thence I strolled over some meadows and along a footpath to the spot where the Llugwy joins its impetuous waters with those of the Conway; and then along the banks of the former, until I came in sight of the venerable old bridge called Pont y Pair, or the Bridge of the Cauldron. This bridge, built on four or five arches, which are fixed on projecting rocks, presents a very picturesque appearance—particularly after heavy rains, when the stream rolls with impetuosity among the rocks, and over the large stones which form the bed of the river. Now, however, it was comparatively tranquil. Stillness prevailed around, save the rippling of the water; the opposite mountain throwing its sombre shade over the surrounding objects.

## CHAPTER XV.

FONT ABERGLASSLYN, PENMORFA, CRICAETH, HARLECH, MAENTWROG, TAN Y BWLCH.

NOR can the tortured wave here find repose :  
But raging still amid the shaggy rocks,  
Now flashes o'er the scatter'd fragments, now  
Aslant the hollow channel rapid darts ;  
And falling fast from gradual slope to slope,  
With wild infracted course and lessen'd roar,  
It gains a safer bed, and steals at last  
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.

*Thomson.*

LEAVING with regret the romantic vale of the Llugwy, and the no less interesting vicinity of Bettws y Coed, I once more bent my steps through the Snowdon hills, and along the noble road I have already described, anxious, on my route towards Merionethshire, to catch one farewell glance of my favourite Beddgelert, and the wild scenery round Aberglasslyn.

On my way to the bridge, my attention was directed to the stone mentioned by Pennant, and known as the seat of the poet of whom I have before spoken,—the patriot Rhys Gôch, contemporary with the great Owen Glendower. It is part of a wanderer's creed to put faith in traditions of this kind ; and I could easily picture to myself the gifted descendant of the house of Hafod pursuing his accustomed solitary walk towards this his beloved retreat, where, seated under the roof of heaven, surrounded by the stern majesty of nature in her darkest, loneliest, or loveliest moods, he poured forth those bold, pathetic hymns which nerved his countrymen to fresh deeds of honour against their oppressors. Among his other productions, not the least pleasant and full of meaning, is that happy satire on the villain fox, who devoured his favourite peacock. It holds forth

‘an o’er true moral,’ with flashes of humour, a covert wisdom mingled with gentle thoughts and sympathies, reminding one at times even of our patriarch Chaucer. He died towards the close of the fifteenth century, after narrowly escaping the vengeance of the English, who pursued him from hill to hill and from cave to cave, but he at last found rest among his beloved haunts at Beddgelert.

The approach to the bridge\* which connects Caernarvonshire with Merionethshire is wonderfully striking—in some points of view, sublime and terrific. The road† where the view first bursts upon the eye in all its varied and extraordinary features, by its bleak, barren aspect, overhung by huge precipices and broken rocks stretching far into the distance, well prepares the mind for those impressions which, on whatever side approached, by day or by moonlight, as Bingley so enthusiastically describes it, never fail to call forth the admiration of the coldest traveller. All the milder features of landscape are here lost in the sublime and terrible; instead of the softer interchange of hill, and lake, and glen, the grandeur of the whole scene, breaking suddenly on the eye, at once arrests and employs the imagination.

From the spot whence I contemplated the chasm, rose craggy cliffs, beetling eight hundred feet above, and huge rocks of most capricious forms,—here bright, there flinging their shadows deep as night upon the black waters, which plunging at first in flashing eddies afterwards form a broad, translucent torrent. The eye almost recoils from the vast projecting precipice, which seems to

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\* Pont Aberglasslyn has been more than once mistaken by the tourist for Pont ar Monach, or the Devil’s Bridge, in Cardiganshire,—a curious arch extending across a much narrower and deeper chasm. Mr. Bingley thus observes that he had expected to see an arch thrown across a deep narrow vale, hanging as it were in mid air; but was disappointed to find it a bridge very little out of the usual form!

† This road, which so late as Mr. Pennant’s visit, was a mere horsepath, after being formed with incredible labour, has lately been sufficiently widened to permit carriages to pass each other, and is bounded on the lower side by a stone wall. In the structure of the bridge there is nothing extraordinary; it consists of a wide stone arch, of thirty feet chord, thrown over a raving torrent, and projected from two perpendicular precipices.

threaten destruction to the narrow ridge upon which I was then standing, and which is close to the brink of the flood. Not a feature of landscape was wanting to complete the mournful charm of the hour and the spot. The gathering twilight giving broader masses to the rude rocks, soaring in succession above bolder cliffs, here piled tier upon tier, and again broken by the huge serpentine chasm,—with the wild wooded scene,—the sounding cataract,—the bright river,—and the deep green glen stretched far below,—recalled to mind some of the boldest Alpine scenery that ever inspired the genius of the painter, or the gloomy joy of the robber chief.

‘The disjointed crags,  
O’er the steep precipice in fragments vast  
Impending, to the astonished mind recall  
The fabled horrors, by demoniac force  
Of Lapland wizards wrought, who borne upon  
The worldwind’s wing, what time the vex’d sea dashed  
Against Norwegia’s cliffs, to solid mass  
Turned the swell’n billows, and the o’erhanging waves  
Fix’d ere they fell.’

With deference to the learned translator of Giraldus, there is reason to believe this must have been the spot where several of the princes of Meirion’s people received from Archbishop Baldwin the sign of the cross, and this extraordinary pass the scenery, that induced the monk to observe ‘that the territory of Conan, particularly Merionyth, is the rudest district of all Wales; the ridges of its mountains are very high, ending in sharp peaks, and so irregularly jumbled together, that if the shepherds conversing together from their summits should agree to meet, they could scarcely effect their purpose in a whole day.’ \*

It is through the ravine below that the river, at times broad and rapid, (formed by the junction of two streams, springing from the lakes on the south-west side of Snowdon,) comes thundering with

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\* Hoare’s Giraldus.







THE GREAT GORGE, GORGE, GORGE.



resistless force. Near the bridge I observed a small fall, close to which was formerly a perpendicular ledge of rock, forming one of the most remarkable salmon-leaps in Wales. It is seldom that the salmon leave the sea until the fall of the year, and bear up towards the fresh water. Hence the disappointment of travellers who, uninitiated in the gentle craft, have stood during the summer months for hours upon the bridge, in order to see the bright-scaled monarch perform his well-known feat of agility. I was more fortunate a few years ago† than I had expected; the season of the year being favourable for beholding this curious proof of piscatory ingenuity. It was only after numerous efforts however, that a noble fish made good his ascent, and overtopped the ledge after two or three failures. After poising himself for a moment to make his circular spring, he gave a sudden jirk which scattered all the lesser fry, and placed him in a moment on the higher eminence. No wonder that a salmon fishery was established here at a very early period;—fish was enumerated in the Welshman's list of game, and protected with all the strictness of the law. This fine weir was vested in the Crown, and, during the reign of Henry IV., was leased out to one Robert ap Meredydd. It has since become private property, and is let to some poor fishermen, at a small annual rate, who turn it to good account.

Among other tourists, Mr. Wyndham justly extols the picturesque grandeur of the scenery around this unrivalled pass. Unfolding some new features at every step, the succession of strata assumes all shapes and all colours, from the lightest gray to the darkest hues of brown and black, and often, when the sun emerges from behind his canopy of clouds, the variegated summits are enriched with the most brilliant tints of light and gold.

Proceeding towards Tremadoc, along the skirt of high overarch-ing cliffs, a noble view soon presented itself—varied and extensive—

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† The shelf of the rock above the bridge, which heretofore formed what was termed the salmon-leap, has more recently given way, and the traveller may now look without a chance of seeing the funny lover's leap.

of the little and great Traeths, stretching to the sea,—the distant Castles of Cricaeth and Harlech,—and those bold embankments, which bear witness to the genius and courage—worthy the present age—of their enterprising founder. Thousands of acres have thus been reclaimed from the waters,—a safe communication formed between the counties of Caernarvon and Merioneth across the estuary of Traeth Mawr, formerly the grave of so many unfortunate wayfarers. Tremadoc deservedly bears the name of its founder. In the vicinity rise the noble mansions of Tan yr Allt and Morva Lodge, the work also of the same enlightened individual. The former discovers great architectural taste, and, being elevated on a lofty rock overlooking the town, surrounded by flourishing plantations, presents a picturesque appearance.

The late W. A. Madocks, Esq., was the enterprising gentleman who has so greatly improved this district. In 1800 he recovered nearly two thousand acres from the sea; and a few years afterwards constructed the large embankment over the Traeth Mawr. About seven thousand acres more were subsequently secured from the encroachment of the tides, five thousand of which are now cultivated. In 1821, Mr. Madocks was instrumental in procuring an Act of Parliament for improving the bay, in which vessels of two or three hundred tons burthen now ride in safety. Port Madoc is one mile from the town, whence great quantities of slates, copper ore, &c. are shipped.

Turning my steps towards Cricaeth, I next stopped for a few hours at the village of Penmorfa, so notorious of old for the rival families which perpetually disturbed its vicinity. Not a few of the adventures of these lords of the soil are worth repeating, if only to awaken the people of the present day to a sense of the great advantages, and infinite superiority of position, which they enjoy, compared with their less civilized predecessors.

One of the Merediths at a place not a mile from Penmorfa, was brought up by a foster-father of the same name. The adopted son married a sister of Howell ap Rhys, but, in conse-

quence of his attachment to his new father, between whose family and that of Howell there had long subsisted a bitter feud, he succeeded to it as a sort of heirloom which he could not shake off. For his first wife, Howell had taken a sister of Jevan, which tended to allay the quarrel; but on her death he became united to a woman of a very opposite temper, whose ungovernable passions roused the slumbering embers of discord into a consuming flame. Rejected love had rendered Jevan the object of her implacable hate; and at such a period, and in so wild a country, 'a woman scorned' was no despicable foe; she scrupled not to have recourse to assassination, and to render her own husband the instrument of her revenge. Several attempts were made upon Jevan's life; and his friends were so closely beset, that they never appeared abroad unarmed. But the Howells, tracking their steps with a scent as sure as the bloodhound's, got information that they were about to meet a large party of friends at a village a few miles distant, to hold a festival of various games and feats of arms. Their way lay through a lonely pass, favourable for the purpose of the pursuers. With a strong party, the assassins lay in ambush, to await the coming of their victims. One of the more resolute was directed, in the heat of the affray, to single out the tallest and most handsome, and getting behind, to fell him with a blow of his axe to the earth. 'You will easily know him,' said Howell, 'by his superior stature; but look before you strike, for he has a foster-brother, Robin ap Jnco, a little close-set fellow, who is ever at his elbow. Now mind this man, for he is a perfect little devil, always on the look out for his brother's safety.' The morning came. Jevan, attended by his wife and several friends, set out; but the former having gone a mile, and perceiving no signs of danger, returned. She had not gone far when Howell and his party sprang from their concealment, eager to fall upon her husband. Suspecting their design, she threw herself in the way, and intreated Howell to have compassion on him. Finding her prayers in vain, she seized his horse's reins; and being flung off, is said to have caught hold of the

animal's tail to arrest his speed, and suffered herself to be dragged along, still imploring the wretch's mercy.

On rushed the assassins till they overtook and fell with relentless swords upon their adversaries; though on foot, Jevan and his friends sustained the onset gallantly. Marking his man, the assassin crept gradually behind and aimed, as he thought, a deadly blow at his head; but little Robin was at hand, and, ere the blow fell, stretched the villain upon the ground. Back to back they repulsed the attack of the horse; and Howell at last cried out that it was time to be gone, since Robin ap Jnco was still alive and on the alert. Though the vengeance of Howell's wife was thus foiled, she did not wholly relinquish her wicked designs. Unfortunately in those savage times only the wretch who actually struck the blow, and who was termed *Llawrudd*, or Red-hand, was held guilty of murder, and the confederates easily made their escape. As Jevan was returning by moonlight near Traeth Mawr, an arrow, evidently directed from an adjacent hill-side, glanced past his head. He stopped; ordered his followers to aim towards the wooded copse, whence the shaft appeared to have been sent, and upon proceeding towards the spot, they discovered, pierced by one of their random arrows, another adherent of the lawless men who had planned the murder. But public enemies as they were, it was remarked that these *Red-hands* were always held in particular regard by the heads of the family by whom they were commissioned. Thus Howell, having ascertained that Jevan and his friends were preparing to attend the assizes at Caernarvon, sent to a famous outlaw, David ap Jenkin, his relative, requesting of him the small favour of storming Jevan's house in his absence, and seizing all his foeman's *Red-hands*, to hang them up in a row before the door. David was too polite to decline the invitation; and being a man of approved valour, holding midnight assassination in contempt, he made his attack early in the morning. Roused by the alarum, the inmates summoned the concealed outlaws of their clan to their assistance; and to set the example, Jevan's wife, who had stuck so fast to the horse's tail,









not a whit daunted, began by emptying the boiling wort—for, like a good housewife, she was already superintending the brewing—upon the heads of her assailants. Then mustering the dairy-maids with their churn staves, they joined the men in giving the Howellites a warm reception. Spite of the breaches at length made in the building, the Jevanites, incited by the valour of the ladies, held the besiegers at bay until, rumours of the attack having spread, some adherents of the family, commanded by little Robin ap Jnco, made a diversion in the rear of the enemy. A sharp contest ensued; and Robin threatening to put every Howellite to the sword when his reserve should arrive, his adversaries prudently sounded a retreat.

Penmorfa lies at the head of some marshy meadows, not far from the Traeth Mawr, under the frowning aspect of Moel Hebog, which separates it from the Vale of Beddgelert; but it presents few features of attraction. In the church is a small monument intended to commemorate the loyalty of the lord of Clenneney, who owned a mansion and domain in the vicinity,—with the addition of a long Latin inscription. Near this village, to the south-east, are the two small inlets of the sea, called the Great and the Little Traeths. Across the former, before the modern improvements, lay the ford on the road leading to Tan y Bwlch, while another over the latter led in the direction of Harlech. These were oftentimes very dangerous from the occasional swelling of the surrounding streams and torrents. But the genius of the mountain storm and the flood has dropped his wand and lost his terrors before the master-spirit of human science; and the treacherous sands, the deep yawning precipice, and the hollow passes are no longer formidable to the pedestrian traveller, as in the days of Doctor Johnson and his predecessors.

In passing the Traeths that morning, I enjoyed the fine coast views, diversified by every variety, and the noble ruins of Cricaeth, and of Harlech Castles, lending a fresh charm to the distance—a charm that soon fails when entering some common market or borough town. Such, at least, was my feeling on

reaching that apology for a borough called Cricaeth. But its picturesque ruin, projecting into the sea, with the relics of its ancient strength and grandeur, the double foss and vallum, the old crumbling towers, once a bulwark of the warlike Edward, and the prospect over the bay to Harlech, more than atoned for its mean aspect and condition.

Taking a boat near Cricaeth, I had a pleasant sail through part of Cardigan Bay to Harlech. This mean little town, now only remarkable for its feudal castle, was formerly a place of considerable importance, and a fortified post of the Romans and the Britons, defending the openings of the two Traeths, and securing a communication with the opposite shore.\*

The name of the old fortress was *Twr Bronwen*, from *Bronwen*, or the fair-necked sister to Bren ap Llyr, Duke of Cornwall, and subsequently King of Britain. In the eleventh century, it was termed *Caer Collwyn*, from *Collwyn ap Tango*, Lord of Ardudwy, who resided in a square tower of the ancient edifice, parts of which, now the foundation of the more modern work, may yet be distinguished. The present castle—one of the most entire in Wales—bears ample evidence of having been erected by the same architect who was employed by Edward I. in his other magnificent and gigantic structures. Commanding both land and sea, it rises from a rock-girt eminence, jutting boldly from the coast. Consisting of one large square building, each side measuring above seventy yards, having a round tower at the several corners, crowned with turrets, now nearly defaced,—how imposing must it have appeared in its pride of strength, with its numerous fortifications, its fosses, and based on the verge of a perpendicular rock which rendered it almost invulnerable! The walls are lofty, towering above the marsh and the sea; and from the summit is beheld a

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\* Many Roman remains, such as the golden torques and a number of coins, seem to corroborate sufficiently the received opinion as to the formidable position of this stronghold of the coast, and of its having been occupied by the Romans.

splendid prospect over the bay,—the promontory of Llyn,—Cricaeth Castle,—the shagged sides of Carreg y Saeth,—and the range of Snowdon hills, soaring far above the other mountains—now bright, now half shrouded in their veil of clouds.

If we may credit tradition, the ancient fortress, on the foundations of which Harlech Castle stands, was built by Maelgwyn Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, about 530. The modern structure was completed in 1283; in 1404 it was seized, with that of Cardigan, by the fiery Glendower; and in the wars of the Roses it afforded a retreat to the high spirited consort of Henry VI., after escaping the grasp of the fierce intriguing Lord Stanley, and the fatal overthrow at Northampton. From Harlech she proceeded to Scotland, raised a new army, and proved her invincible heroism upon the plains of Wakefield. When the tide of victory set in favour of Edward IV., the only strongholds which held out against the victor, were a few castles in Northumberland and that of Harlech. The last was held for the Lancastrian party by David ap Jevan, equally distinguished by his immense stature and by his valour. Spite of threats and sieges, he remained governor nine years after the coronation of Edward. At length the King sent an army against him, commanded by the Earl of Pembroke. After marching with incredible difficulty and hardship through the rough defiles of the British Alps, surmounting terrific crags, and passing along steep precipices, the English at length succeeded in surrounding the fortress. Pembroke committed the siege to his brother, a hero at least equal in size, if not in military prowess, to the British commander. In reply to the summons for surrender, the fiery Cambrian made answer, that once in France ‘he held a tower till all the old women in Wales heard of it, and that the old women of France should now hear how he had defended a Welsh castle.’\*

Sir Richard, finding all other means fruitless, had at length

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\* History of the Gwydir Family.



From the top of the  
Rock of Gibraltar



W. H. H. H.





On my way to one of my favourite stations—the Caen Coed Inn, at Tan y Bwlch,—I took the opportunity of visiting a waterfall, called the Rhaiadr Du, formed by the interesting little river Velin Rhyd, about two miles from Maentwrog. The water separates after the fall into two or three channels. Rocks, covered with moss, shrubs, and trees, form scenery at once rude and grand.

Regaining the high road, I soon reached the pleasant and salubrious village of Maentwrog; passing through which I shortly arrived at the Caen Coed Inn—now, however, more familiarly known by the appellation of the ‘Oakley Arms Hotel.’

The following morning was delightfully fine and the air invigorating. After breakfast—accompanied by a pedestrian from the Emerald Isle, who, though a previous stranger to me, I found a most agreeable and intelligent companion,—I entered the grounds of the neighbouring mansion, eager to behold the truly romantic scenery around. Few things can surpass the pleasure of a morning ramble through the woods which clothe the heights above the hall, or the splendour of the prospect from the terrace over the vale, which is delightfully enriched with every feature of landscape and of water, and forms a rich panoramic picture.

In my walk through the grounds, I observed some magnificent specimens of the rhododendron, of nearly thirty years’ growth, and more than forty yards in circumference; many other plants and trees appeared to grow equally luxuriantly, and both gardens and plantations were tastefully laid out, and well adapted to the soil and to the continual inequalities in the surface and the aspect. It was here I first remarked the singular appearance of two fine young trees, an elm and an ash, which, having sprung up side by side, intertwined their stems almost from the root in so strict an embrace as to present the sylvan phenomenon of a single tree.

## CHAPTER XVI.

DOLGELLEY, NANNAU PARK, CADER IDRIS, TAL Y LLYN, MACHYNLETH, DINAS MOWDDY.

I LOVE to sit upon the rocky verge  
Of some high crag, whose foot the angry surge  
Hath bathed in snowy foam;—the feathery spray  
Flings up bright sparkles in the sunny ray,  
Like moving hoar-frost, glancing here and there—  
A flying fairy-land in giddy air,  
Mimicking winter's attributes so well,  
We gaze, and wonder what could raise the spell,  
And lend such wizard power to earthly things,  
That now seem launched upon a thousand wings,  
And plunge aloft, in wild essays to rise,  
And join their fleecy kindred of the skies.

*Sea-side Thoughts, by L. A. Twamley*

BEING impatient to reach Dolgelley, I determined upon delaying my visit to Ffestiniog until my return, and left Tan y Bwlch late in the evening in an open chaise, and a little before midnight arrived at Trawsfynydd, about seven miles on the road. The situation of this village, environed by bleak and barren mountains, is peculiarly wild and lonely, and, wrapped in the silence of night, now appeared doubly striking. But, on entering the inn, whatever might be the aspect of external nature, I found the inhabitants to be a jolly, self-satisfied race, intent upon eating and drinking, and enjoying, in their way, whatever worldly advantages had fallen to their share. It was, in fact, the evening of a fair, and the village inn was crowded with peasantry of both sexes; and the men, as if resolved not to yield in social prowess, drank and smoked like so many burgomasters. On observing the entrance of a stranger they rose, drank his health, and soon began to sing, with much

cordiality and some taste, a number of Welsh airs, in honour—I was assured by the complacent host—of my arrival.

Though my stay at this place was extremely brief, it was long enough to allow my driver to chime in with the revellers—in fact to become *rather* tipsy; and, after having, with some difficulty, saved him from breaking his neck by falling headlong over the wheels, I was compelled to change places with him, and undertake myself the office of charioteer. ‘Albeit unused to the *whipping* mood,’ I was enabled, by my novel situation, to enjoy so much of the landscape as could be seen by moon and starlight.

All mountainous countries have by night a peculiarly interesting and romantic aspect; the dusky eminences seeming vaster as they rise in the distance against the sky, the valleys and hollows, contemplated from roads running midway along the face of steep acclivities, presenting the appearance of unfathomable depth, and every cwm, ravine, or rocky pass, near to or through which I rapidly moved, seemed infinitely more wild than when day exhibits every object in full relief.

Having passed, without stopping, through Llanilltyd, I arrived about two o’clock in the morning at Dolgelley. At such an hour there is, of course, not a creature stirring in a Welsh town, and this one being unilluminated was beyond expression silent and dismal. However, it was not long before I roused the jolly landlord of the ‘Angel,’ and, having obtained admittance into his castle, retired to rest.

Though the vicinity of no town, perhaps, in Wales possesses a greater variety of attractions than that of Dolgelley, my first visit next morning was to Nannau Park, the seat of Sir Robert Williams Vaughan. The house stands on an eminence, and the road thither from the town is one continued ascent. From various parts of it I paused to enjoy the delightful views obtained over the Vale of the Hazle, traversed in its whole extent by the river Wnion.

The grounds of Nannau are entered under a fine old gateway, and, in approaching the house, at least a mile distant from the

entrance to the park, I passed along the side of a little murmuring stream, and through a succession of romantic dingles, covered with black-berry bushes, ivy, and moss. The weather being hot, it was pleasant to pause from time to time under the shades of the gigantic old trees that flung their gnarled boughs over the road, the spaces between them being here and there filled up by an exuberant growth of underwood. Innumerable black-birds, linnets, and other singing birds filled the air with music; and, except the buzzing of flies, rising in clouds from the copses, and the rippling of the brook at my feet, no other sounds met the ear. Nothing could be more rural or picturesque, more calm or tranquil, than the whole scene. In the foliage of the woods, there was all that variety of rich tint produced by the intermingling of the oak, the lime, the walnut, the laurel, the acacia, the ash, the fir, and the beech, grouped and contrasted with infinite beauty.

‘Dew-drops like diamonds hung on every tree,  
And sprinkled silvery lustre o’er the lea;  
And all the verdurous herbage of the ground  
Was decked with pearls which cast a splendour round;  
The flowers, the buds, and every plant that grew  
Sipp’d the fresh fragrance of the morning dew.  
In every plant the liquid nectar flowed,  
In every bud, and every flower that blowed;  
Here roved the busy bees without control,  
Robbed the sweet bloom, and sucked its balmy soul.’

The gardens of Nannau are extensive, and laid out with much taste. Owing, however, to the under gardener’s entire ignorance of the English language, and his superintendent being absent that day, I probably lost much of the history of the grounds, which, related with all that confident, unconscious prolixity known only in the present day to this description of chroniclers, might have proved exceedingly amusing both to me and my readers. Still I made in his company the round of hothouses, greenhouses, &c., and greatly admired the number of beautiful exotics collected on

this highest spot devoted to agriculture in the kingdom. Here and there in the gardens, the formation and laying out of which were attended with extraordinary expense, are neat tablets, one of which was set up as a warning by the proprietor, to commemorate the death of a servant, who, having swallowed four hundred and forty plum stones, naturally enough lost her life.

The mansion is spacious and elegant; but the chief attraction of the spot, which is probably not exceeded in point of scenery by any in the kingdom, lies in the beauty and the romantic traditions of the park. In the higher part are the remains of a British post, noticed by all tourists, called *Moel Orthryn*, or the Hill of Oppression, having, probably, as Pennant conjectures, been formerly held by some tyrant; and here, also, until lately, stood an immense oak, blasted and hollowed by time, in which, according to popular belief, Owen Glendower concealed the body of his treacherous cousin, Howel Sele, who had been bribed to make an attempt upon his life, but who, failing in the attempt, is supposed to have met with the strange and horrible fate of being immured alive. Pennant and Evans, with an unskilful application of their classical reading, talk of Hamadryads, &c., in connection with the fatal tree, and inform us that it was denominated 'the Hollow Oak, the Haunt of Demons.' But the only demon known to the peasants of the neighbourhood would be the ghost of Howel Sele, or a White Lady, or the Little People, as they call the fairies.

In Pennant's time, the trunk of this patriarchal tree was twenty-seven feet and a half in circumference; it was in the last stage of decay, and pierced by age into the form of a Gothic arch. Its end is thus described by Sir Richard Colt Hoare:—'During a visit to Sir Robert Vaughan, in the year 1813, this aged tree, mentioned by Mr. Pennant, attracted my notice; and, on the morning of the 13th July, I made a drawing of it, in one of the most sultry days I ever felt; the succeeding night was equally hot, and on the same night this venerable oak fell to the ground.'

In descending the hill leading towards Dolgelley, I enjoyed a

magnificent view of the Alpine chain of Cader Idris, extending from the north-east to the south-west, in a line parallel with the shore. The mist still rested on the inferior heights, in some places concealing their summits, in others stretching in slender horizontal lines or masses along their slopes. All the adjacent eminences are richly wooded, and though the trees, in most places, are of recent planting, the appearance of the whole is no less imposing than that of natural primeval forests. But for me, 'the old hereditary trees,' which inspired the muse of Cowley, have a charm no new plantations can boast; and, as I retraced my steps, the hills and groves of my boyhood, with youthful companions, no longer at my side, rose in all the strength of reality before me; and for the moment I gave way to one of those delightful day-dreams in which the imagination will at times indulge as a kind of set-off against the frowns of fate. Like a glow of sunset upon the lake, for a few brief instants they disperse the black, deepening shadows which portend the approach of night, and throw at least a passing radiance upon our homeward path.

On my return to Dolgelley after my morning's ramble, mine host of the Angel, who expected my arrival, welcomed me with an excellent dinner. But from the number of queries I made about the localities, I doubt not—from some of his John Bull kind of remarks—that he thought me *rather* a suspicious character; which I dare say was further strengthened from the circumstance of my midnight introduction to him, and being an entire stranger to the district. However, he was very civil, and, after I had finished my refectation, proposed becoming my guide round the town. I could not refuse so polite an offer, and presently sallied forth 'to see what was to be seen.'

Dolgelley is encircled by mountains, and seated on the river Wnion, here a broad, shallow stream, over which is a handsome bridge of seven arches. It has a neat church, containing some old monuments; and a commodious county-hall, in which is a portrait of Sir Robert Vaughan, by the President of the Royal Academy.





W. S. Phillips

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THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE, N. H.





The picture, however, was suspended in so bad and even dark a situation, that its merits may be said to be altogether lost.

The following morning promising a fine day, I determined on an excursion over Cader Idris. This mountain is one of the most lofty in Wales, and forms a part of the great chain of hills which runs nearly parallel with the coast for many miles, in connection with the Arrans and the Arrenigs. Proceeding over the hill which leads to Towyn, I reached a small lake called Llyn y Gader; then, turning to the left, commenced the ascent. Presently the pool Llyn y Cae showed itself, situated among high rocks, whose weather-beaten cliffs overhang the water. After great labour for three or four hours, and consequent fatigue, I reached the summit; but thick mists, wafted from the sea, prevented an extended view. Mr. Aikin has enriched his narrative with a description of the grand and picturesque scene he witnessed, the following extract from which leaves nothing to be desired:—‘We were now above all the eminences within a vast expanse, and as the clouds gradually cleared away, caught some grand views of the surrounding country. The huge rocks, which we before looked up to with astonishment, were now far below our feet, and many a small lake appeared in the valleys between them. To the north, Snowdon and its dependencies shut up the scene; on the west, we saw the whole curve of the bay of Cardigan, bounded at a great distance by the Caernarvon mountains, and nearer, dashing its white breakers against the rocky coast of Merioneth. The southern horizon was bounded by Plinlimmon, the bay of Swansea, the channel, peeping through the opening of the Brecon mountains; and on the east, the eye glanced over the lake of Bala, the two Arrenig mountains, the two Arrans, and the long chain of Berwyn mountains, to the Breiddin hills on the confines of Shropshire. Dimly, in the distant horizon, was beheld the Wrekin, rising alone from the plain of Salop.’

At the foot of the mountain is the romantic little village of Tal y Llyn, which borrows its name from the church at the head of the lake, not unmeetly denominated by the people ‘the Charming

Retreat.' The church—a simple antique building—is dedicated to St. Mary. The parish extends about eight miles, embracing in its circuit a large portion of the mountainous chain. The whole vicinity, wood, and hill, and lake—stirred by the winds, or clothed with the yellow hues of autumn—wore a highly picturesque yet dreary aspect; and I took incessant delight in exploring a number of bold, romantic streams and falls, all within the limits of this interesting district. Tal y Llyn is assuredly one of the most beautiful of lakes, and deserves all the eulogy bestowed upon it by the popular voice. It extends two miles in length and one in breadth; part of its boundary consists of highly cultivated pastures, rendered more picturesque from the circumstance of the higher land, which extends half way up the mountain, affording a noble sheep walk. This lake is the property of Colonel Vaughan, a gentleman to whose courtesy and good nature strangers, no less than friends, are indebted for the amusement of a day's angling at pleasure, and if they prefer a sail, there is a boat at hand for their accommodation. Few waters furnish a better supply of trout and eels—the latter considered a great delicacy, owing to the peculiar nutriment they find in the deep coating moss of the bottoms. Here are both the lake and the common river-trout, the last of which come with the streams springing from the mountains. They are chiefly taken with the fly, and vary in size from one half to two pounds each.

A walk of about seven miles, through highly picturesque and delightful scenery, conducts the tourist to the ancient town of Machynlleth, situated on the road leading to Aberystwith, and near the confluence of the rivers Dulas and Dovey. It is the centre of the woollen manufacture, and does considerable business in tanning,—occupations singularly at variance with its former military reputation. It was once the Maglona of the Romans, and had a lieutenant stationed to awe the mountaineers. About two miles distant, near Penalt, is a spot denominated Cefn caer, where many Roman coins have been found, and the traces are still visible of an old circular fortification.

The spacious entrance to the Senate-house, now degraded into a stable, denotes a more honourable occupancy in past times. It was here the active Glendower, summoning the nobles and gentry, advanced his title to the newly conquered Principality. Among these came Sir David Gam, who, though related to the heroic chief, conceived the base design of assassinating him in a private conference. He was discovered, and would have been instantly put to death, but for the intercession of powerful friends. He escaped on condition of joining the Welsh cause; but the double traitor again turning against his magnanimous countryman, Owen kept him in close confinement at Machynlleth, and burnt his house to the ground. On his escape he took refuge in the English Court, attended Henry V. in his wars, and, on the eve of the battle of Agincourt, on returning from reconnoitring the enemy, he informed the King, that 'there were enough to kill, enough to be made prisoners, and enough to run away.'

The Town-hall is a plain, convenient building, erected by the late Sir W. W. Wynn, in which courts leet are held twice in the year. Few Welsh towns have kept pace with the spirit of modern improvement more than Machynlleth, of which the new road to Towyn, which offers many beautiful and picturesque views, is not the least proof. The portion between Penal and Aberdovey, in particular, cut out of the solid rock, abounds in delightful prospects of the Cardigan coasts, and of the sea stretching far beyond.

Leaving Machynlleth, I pursued the road leading to Llanidloes for about six miles, passing a hill called Fadin, and then turning to the right over dreary moors, came to a large sheet of water, known by the name of Glas Llyn—the blue lake. It was my intention to walk over the wastes as far as the mountain of Plinlimmon, in order to explore the source of the river Wye;\* but the weather

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\* It is my intention, in a future part of this work, to give a description of the varied and exquisite scenery of the river Wye. Comprehending many renowned works of art, which give additional interest to sublime and interesting views, the coldest observer cannot fail being delighted with this romantic stream, here quietly gliding between luxuriant foliage—there fantastically meandering over its rocky bed.

becoming tempestuous, and being unacquainted with the localities, I judged it more prudent to postpone my excursion until a more suitable opportunity occurred, and proceed to Dinas Mowddy, rather than run the chance of remaining in a bog during the night.

Dinas Mowddy is an insignificant town, picturesquely situated on the declivity of a rock, not far from the river Cerrist at its conflux with the Dovey. It has only one long street, and the houses are low and meanly built. One of its chief buildings is the 'Plas,' or mansion,—or, in other words, the manor-house of the lordship,—which, I was told, belonged from an early period to the Myttons of Halston, but had been more recently purchased by Mr. Bird, of Birmingham. The approach to Dinas Mowddy, from Mallwyd, is rendered more striking by the sudden appearance of the town at the junction of three valleys, each of which is enclosed by majestic hills. Its great charm, indeed, is the novel and romantic character of the surrounding scenery.

. This large estate, the manorial rights of which extend over thirty thousand acres, was possessed for several centuries by the Mytton family. Many years ago a lead mine was worked upon the mountain called Craig Gwyn, but soon abandoned on account of water filling up the workings, which, for want of proper machinery, could not be removed. Since Mr. Bird purchased the estate, he has employed a mineral surveyor to examine the mountains, and to ascertain what they contain.\* At the foot of Craig Gwyn, and extending upwards, is one of the largest slate deposits in the

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\* At the old mine of Craig Gwyn the vein or lead appeared so broad, and the quality of the lead so rich, that a party of gentlemen last year formed themselves into a company, with a capital of £20,000, to work this mine effectually. They have driven two new adits lower down the mountain to drain the water from the old workings, and cut the great vein which crops out on the top. The works are successfully progressing, and the lead on analysis is proved to contain twenty-five ounces of fine silver, and twelve cwt. of pure lead in every ton of ore. There is a company formed in London to work the slate quarries, who have also projected a railway of seventeen miles to the coast near Barmouth.







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VIEW OF MOUNTAIN AND RIVER

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kingdom, denominated primitive clay roofing slate. In various parts, metallic veins have been discovered, which, I understand, the present proprietor intends shall not lie neglected. There are some hopes, therefore, that the poor, insignificant town of Dinas Mowddy may, in a few years, become a flourishing place, and the centre of a new mining district.

That facetious member of the Antiquarian Society, Mr. Wm. Hutton, visited this neighbourhood nearly half a century ago, and published the following remarks:—‘The situation of Dinas Mowddy is romantic, singular, and beautiful, upon a small flat made by nature and improved by art, on the declivity of a mountain prodigiously elevated, on the left descending to the town, and on the right, continuing the same steep down to the river Dovey, which washes its foot. The road winds round the hill in the shape of a bow, and the houses take the same curve. Curiosity led me to count the houses, which were forty-five. One of these, by far the best, is worth, at a fair rent, perhaps fifty shillings per annum. In most of the houses I perceived the inhabitants could not injure themselves by falling down stairs. Although in England I appeared like other men, yet at Dinas Mowddy I stood single. The people viewed me as a phenomenon, with countenances mixed with fear and enquiry. Perhaps they took me for an inspector of taxes; they could not take me for a window-peeper, for there were scarcely any to peep at, and the few I saw were in that shattered state which proved there was no glazier in the place. Many houses were totally without glass. Ambition here seems wholly excluded. The dress of the inhabitants changes not; it is made for use, not show. That of the softer sex, I was told, is a flannel shift. I did not see the smallest degree of smartness in the apparel even of the younger females. One of the curiosities I saw was a goat feeding, much at ease, upon the ridge of a house. Perhaps the people within did not fare much better than the goat without. Returning, well pleased with my visit, I remarked to my landlord at Mallwyd, a

civil, intelligent man, that I could not conceive the whole property of the united inhabitants of the celebrated town exceeded six hundred pounds. 'I can tell you to a trifle,' said he, 'for I know every one of them well.' After a short pause he replied, 'It does not exceed two hundred and forty pounds!' If care be the concomitant of wealth, these people must be happy; and their circumscribed style of existence seems to declare it. I saw neither a beggar nor a person in rags.'

Intending to visit Barmouth, and, in my way there, the Abbey of Kimmer, at Llanilltyd, I bent my steps again towards Dolgelley through some remarkably bold and magnificent scenery, presenting extensive views to the left, while the great mountain of Craig Gwyn towered on the right. It was in this neighbourhood that the inhabitants of the district, after the death of Llewellyn, met together to form compacts for enforcing virtue and order. The road into Dolgelley is a descent for about a mile, from the upper part of which the town has a remarkably neat and rural appearance.

## CHAPTER XVII.

KYMKER ABBEY, LLANILLTYD, BARMOUTH, DOLYMELTNYLYN, TRAWSFYNYDD, &c.

'Twas that delightful season, when the broom,  
Full flowered, and visible on every steep,  
Along the copses runs in veins of gold.

*Wordsworth.*

Oh! beautiful those wastes of heath,  
Stretching for miles to lure the bee,  
Where the wild bird, on pinion strong,  
Wheels round and pours his piping song,  
And timid creatures wander free.

*Mary Howitt.*

ONE of the pleasant circumstances attending my autumnal 'Wanderings,' was the delightful weather I enjoyed—sky and air such as could not fail to delight a pedestrian's heart—with clear, mellow days, and serene, refulgent nights, which painted the scenes before me in a thousand brilliant hues, and under a continual variety of form and aspect. To have studied the beauties of the foliage, or the vales and lakes, in the mild splendour of the season's fall, when the harvest queen 'filled her horn with new-born light,' would of itself have afforded ample return for lonely walks, and some toil and adventure, which brought me in view of those more sequestered and wildly beautiful spots which in Wales often greet the eye of the enthusiast of nature. Nor was the pleasure diminished by thus coming oftener in contact with the primitive character and pastoral habits of the people, their appearance and their manners, yet highly national amidst so many changes, and upon which, without destroying their form and their simplicity, the genius of improvement is happily engrafting new ideas, and,

with more general education and improved prospects, still better institutions. Reflections on the future, which I indulged by the way-side, were thus far from an unpleasant nature; and the recollection of what I had seen, and the onward impulse towards yet greater improvements, struck me more forcibly at every step.

From Dolgelley and its romantic neighbourhood, I passed up the old road, over a very steep hill, and turned my steps towards the singularly picturesque and ancient monastic ruin called Y Vanner, or Kymmer Abbey. Viewed in combination with the rich diversity of objects presenting themselves along the banks of the Mawddach, the approach to this time-worn monument of vanished ages has something strangely sombre and impressive. Above, in the distance, towers the dark rock of Moel Orthwn; below, several valleys, watered by the intermingling of different streams, their banks studded with neat and elegant residences; on one side appears the bridge—the modest church, and on the other extends the rich flat ground on which stand the relics of the antique abbey. Only a portion of the church is now to be seen; the great hall, or refectory, and a part of the abbot's residence, have resigned their more costly and spiritual charge for the less dignified, but not less necessary, avocations of a farm-house. The east side is in the best state of preservation, and through its close mantle of ivy may be perceived the small narrow windows peculiar to old religious edifices. I observed, also, some rather minute Gothic pillars and arches against the south wall, and an aperture, in which, probably, was preserved the holy water. On the same side appears to have been a semicircular door, opposite to two small arches, and near them is seen a fragment of a statue representing the head of a human figure. The space of ground within the walls is more than usually circumscribed.

According to Mr. Vaughan, the antiquary, it was founded by the grandsons of Owen Gwynedd; the monks were of the Cistercian order, and the abbey dedicated to the holy Virgin. It may be said of her priests, as of the humbler rustics by whom they were







THE MOUNTAIN SCENE



surrounded, that tradition has not commemorated 'their homely joys and destiny obscure,' any more than the astonishing cures or miracles which they wrought under the auspices of their lady-patroness,—but few having the good fortune of the gentle Saint Winefred. The charter of the abbey offers a striking instance of the superstition of the age, and those delusions to which the minds of princes are equally subjected with that of the rudest peasant. The most ample grants, 'authority over lakes, rivers, and seas; all kinds of birds and beasts, wild or tame; mountains, woods, things moveable and immoveable; every thing upon or under the lands contained in the deed, with full liberty of digging for hidden treasures,' are among the privileges of the good brethren of old. An antiquarian of great celebrity likewise observes, with reference to their good taste, that 'the abbey is situated in as pleasant a spot as ever he saw. It was, in short, a colony of monks sent away as bees are when the hive is too full. But, idle as they were, the old monks were men of exquisite taste.'

Proceeding along the banks of the river, I passed the bridge, and entered the pretty village of Llanilltyd, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Mawddach, in the hundred of Arddwy, containing a number of good houses. The parish extends in different directions several miles, embracing in its circuit the ancient abbey already noticed; but so few traces of its once noble castle remain, that its very site is uncertain. It is considered the port to its more important neighbour.

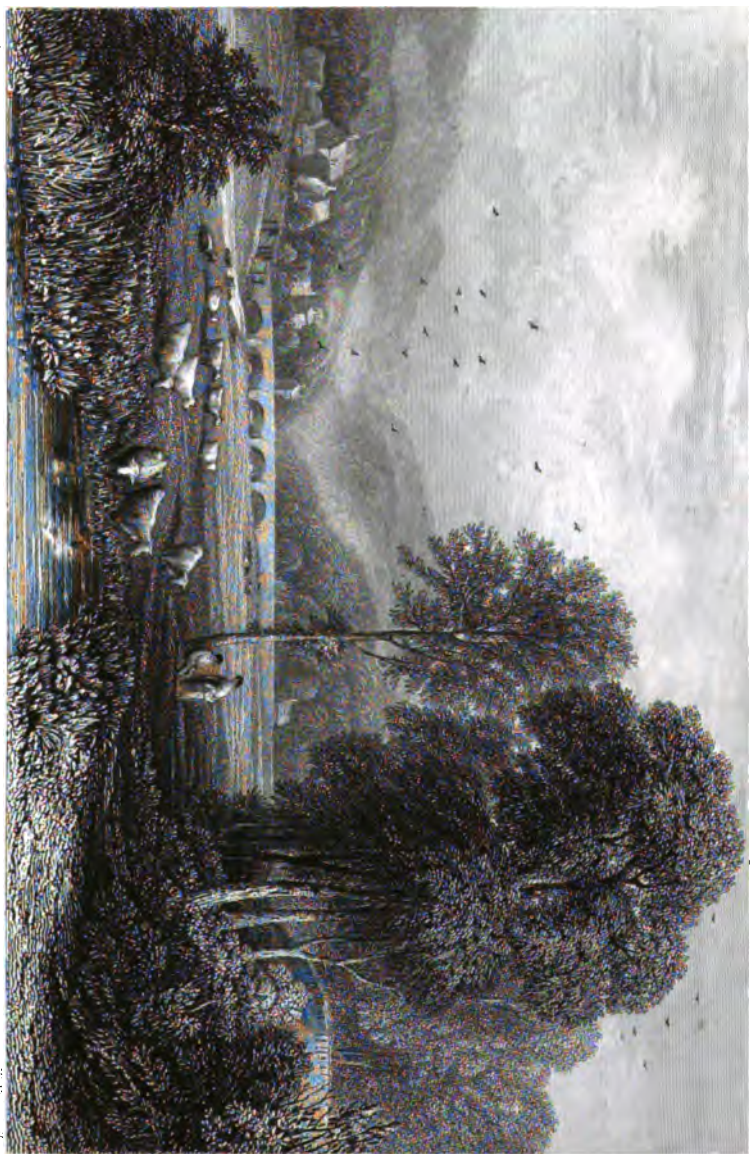
The most exquisite natural charm is ever heightened by a sense of moral beauty. In passing through a succession of those mild and lovely, or bold, romantic districts, in which this part of Merioneth so largely abounds, I felt a satisfaction not experienced in my former excursions, as I contemplated the changes that had already taken place, and those more important and salutary ones fast approaching, which, added to its exterior embellishments and improvements, must confer a moral and intellectual dignity upon the country, more gratifying to the eye of the observer than even her

picturesque falls and streams, or the splendour of her vales and woodlands. The spirit of freedom, industry, and an era better adapted to develop the intellectual energies of the Welsh, was evidently at work, preparing the social mind for some higher and more advanced state of civilisation. I marked a self-respect, a degree of courtesy and propriety, in the demeanour of the labouring classes, I had not hitherto beheld. New sources of employment, and both rural and commercial activity, were producing increased prosperity through the leading districts of the Principality. The enterprising spirit, also, of the public men,—seeking new channels for the investment of capital, leading to an union and extension of interests, led by persons of wealth and influence, at the head of whom names like the Marquis of Anglesea, Lord Mostyn, Lord Clive, Sir W. W. Wynn, Lord Dinorben, Sir Robert Vaughan, Mr. Smith, Mr. Pennant, and others of large mining or landed property, seemed to guarantee success,—was a farther earnest of its rapid progress in the race of modern improvement. The patronage of new agricultural societies, those for the diffusion of education and the Scriptures, with the revival of some of the old bardic meetings, and others of a more modern, learned, and literary character, bore equal evidence of that zeal and perseverance in the higher classes, so intimately connected with the welfare of the people at large.

The vale of Llanilltyd can boast of beauties peculiar to itself; and it is to this distinctive feature that so much of the charm we still find in the recurrence of valleys, streams, and woodlands, still unexhausted, is chiefly to be referred. Here, as I saw it, at the close of autumn,—with the murmurs of the river, the sound of the dashing cataract loud on the ear, mingled with the whistling winds from the mountain hollows, the richly diversified foliage assuming still new lights and shadows with the varying clouds, the parting sunbeams or gathering twilight,—it had more of the wild and sombre than the beautiful, for which it has been so often extolled. As I bent my steps along the sedgy banks of the brawling stream,







THE SWANS, A STUDY FOR THE GREAT SWAN



and marked the evening shadows lengthening upon the distant heights, and the thin mist gradually shrouding the magnificent prospects spread around, the thoughts of one of my favourite poets rose fresh in my mind, recalled no less by their singular truth and beauty, than by the hour and the scene.

It is just beyond this point the eye commands a prospect of surpassing interest and loveliness, one which leaves nothing to be desired with regard to picturesque effect. The broad waters of the Mawddach open in front, often enlivened by skiffs and pleasure boats; on both sides appear, agreeably alternated, a succession of wooded eminences projecting into the estuary along the banks, and producing a fine scenic illusion, by concealing the termination of the river, giving it the appearance of a wide, extensive lake. To the south, from beyond the banks, is beheld the vast, majestic cliffs surrounding on all sides and half concealing the airy summit of Cader Idris: from the bridge, a splendid variety of prospects, stretching towards Maentwrog, as well as of the gloomy, yet picturesque vale of Llanilltyd. It was here, and farther on the road to Barmouth, that Mr. Warner was so much struck with the rich diversity of landscape which he beheld. Suddenly turning upon Pont Ddu, a stone bridge of one arch, spanning a furious torrent, which, rushing from a dark, wooded glen, forms a beautiful cascade, he proceeded about a mile farther, where the scene, assuming a wholly different aspect, is suddenly changed. The mountains in front, receding from the river, are replaced by rich green meadows, while the stream, here widening and deepening, gives a new and majestic feature to the prospect. Behind is caught the different reaches and windings of the river, which at length loses itself in the great waste of waters, together with the shaded hills that confine it on one side, and the rocky precipices of Cader Idris on the other.

The herds were grazing quietly along the banks; the white sail was just seen bending its homeward path; and to the raving of the autumnal blasts, which covered the streams and woodlands with

the fallen leaves, there succeeded a solemn stillness,—one of those deep, calm pauses in the stir of life, and in the very air, which momentarily is felt even in crowded cities, but which now, pursuing my lonely way along the vale, had a singularly unwonted effect upon the mind. The feeling was more strongly impressed, also, by contrast with the richly variegated views of hills and streams which I had that morning beheld through the strong, clear light of a brilliant sunrise, and with a beautiful rainbow, such as I had never before remarked, or even thought possible—with its perfect reflection in the depth of its glorious hues upon the hills, of which the declivities shone with all the mingled colours of the radiant arch which spanned their majestic brows.

It was in a deeply moralising mood, then, on that evening,—philosophically commenting upon the ever fresh and varying aspect of external nature, and how strangely it appeals to the heart, presenting so true a type of man's change and destiny,—that I approached Pont Ddu, on my road to the romantic seaport of Barmouth. Upon my left flowed the bright river; the towering summits of the giant Idris—almost baffling the sight—stretching far beyond; around and behind me lay the deepening, shadowy vale; while to the right the bold hills presented the appearance of huge mountain waves in the rolling mists and fast gathering twilight. The silvery tints and beauty of the river, pursuing its destined path, like the current of life, through the heart of these wild and dreary mountains; the occasional views of woods, meadows, and corn fields, intersected by some branch streams, and again the wilder moor, the mountain hollow, the bushy dells, through which is caught at intervals some flashing cataract,—made my walk along the Mawddach most interesting.

Speaking of the road from Llanilltyd to Barmouth, Mr. Pratt says, 'Its beauties are so manifold and extraordinary, that they literally beggar description. New pastures of the most exuberant fertility, new woods rising in the majesty of foliage, the road itself curving in numberless unexpected directions, at one moment

shut into a verdant recess, so contracted that there seems neither carriage nor bridle-way out of it: at another, the azure expanse of the main ocean filling the eye. On one side rocks glittering in all the colours of that beauty which constitutes the sublime, and of an height which diminishes the wild herds that browse or look down upon you from the summit, where the largest animal appears insignificantly minute. On the other hand, plains, villas, cottages, or copses, with whatever tends to form that milder grace which belongs to the beautiful.'

The entrance to Barmouth, or Abermaw, as it is designated from its river, on the day I reached it, was particularly pleasant to me. The weather was beautiful; the sunset in which I beheld the surrounding landscape, and the far more splendid and magnificent view of the bay and the sea stretching far beyond, was such as I shall not easily forget.\*

The river, taking its course to the south of the town, is here divided into two channels, between which lies the little island called Ynis Brawd, or the Friar's Island. I find this circumstance alluded to in the entertaining and accurate Itinerary of Leland, who observes, in his own quaint manner, 'at the north of Maw river lyeth a little islet, scant a bow shot over, without habitation. At ebbe it is fresche water, and at fludde salt.' Thus was formed the harbour, which anciently, we are told, before it was inundated by the sea, occasioned by the shifting of the sands, afforded pasturage for flocks and herds.

The houses are disposed in a singular, but not unpicturesque manner, on the sides of an immense sloping rock, which shelters them on the eastern side; and whole rows appear standing on the ledges, like shelves one above the other, and, in winding up the

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\* For the sake of the lover of etymology, it may be observed, that this name is derived from that of Abermaw, abbreviated into Bermaw—a compound itself, formed from the name of the river Mawddach, or *Maw* and that of *Aber*, the conflux of the stream—and again corrupted, for the sake of euphony, by us barbarous English, into the modern sounding Barmouth.

narrow paths among the buildings, at different stages the inhabitants may be seen standing at the doors, quietly looking over the chimneys of their neighbours. The approach is by steps cut through the rocks, and the floor of one range is nearly level with that of the roof below it. There is consequently little necessity for smoking in a population so situated—the lower tier regularly regaling the one next above it with strong warm puffs—more especially when the wind is in their favour. But the good people of Barmouth only in part follow the scriptural injunction of ‘building their houses on a rock,’ for they show, also, a predilection for the sand, and a street has been formed leading to the beach.

Barmouth is considered to the north-west part of the kingdom much like Weymouth, and other fashionable watering places, are to the south, and is resorted to during the summer months, not only by numbers of families in the Principality, but many others residing in the surrounding counties. It was, I understand, for several years, the summer retreat of the late well-known and highly respected gentleman, Mr. Wilberforce, and, also, of many other eminent individuals. The bathing at all times is assuredly as excellent as can be desired. The sands are very fine and hard, extending along the beach for several miles. The restless tides of the channel, dashing against the surrounding coast, produce that constant and salubrious motion which is extended to the waters of the bay. The accommodations for bathers have not been, until lately, of the most approved kind. The parish church is more than a mile from Barmouth; but for public convenience a chapel of ease was erected by subscription six years ago, where divine service is performed, in the English language, every Sunday. There are, also, two convenient inns,—the Cors y Gedol Arms, where warm sea water baths may be had, and the Commercial Inn, besides a number of respectable lodging houses.

Barmouth is the chief haven in Merionethshire, but the entrance to the port is dangerous from the incessant shifting of the sands, particularly on the two banks called the north and south bars.







1874

1874

PAVING STONE



To defend it from destruction by the tides, large hillocks of sand, made firm and bound together by the friendly aid of two stringent runners, the *Arundo Arevaria* and *Elymus Arevaria*, which, spreading their long creeping roots, present a vegetable bulwark sufficient to keep back the waves. The high mountains round the harbour present the advantage to be derived from landmarks, for steering inwards during foggy weather. A pier has been constructed for increasing the depth of water, facilitating the lading and unlading of cargoes, and buoys are placed on each bar, which tend to diminish the number of accidents arising from sudden squalls and tempests. Spite of the natural disadvantages, however, the people of the port contrive to carry on a pretty good trade with Ireland and other parts; the number of ships is increasing, especially those employed in the coasting trade, conveying corn, butter, cheese, oak-bark, timber, and bringing back coal, culm, and other articles for the use of the interior. The manufacturers at one period suffered considerable loss by vending their products through the factors, who reaped many of the advantages which might have fallen to the lot of the natives. Mr. Pennant observes, prior to the year 1781, 'that webs, flannels, &c., to the value of forty thousand pounds, and stockings to the amount of ten thousand, had been exported hence in one year.'

Upon my return, taking the route of Mr. Bingley, so often described by different tourists, I continued along the banks of the Mawddach till I reached the road, beyond the beach, leading to Dolgelley, made at a prodigious expense by blasting the rocks. Few excursions can surpass the delightful walk among the mountains back to Llanilltyd, where every thing is found that gives a charm to pastoral beauty. The dense wood, the wild, overhanging precipice, the large, gloomy rocks, partially covered with purple heath,—the bright river, with every other requisite for the finest landscape, insulated or grouped in the most picturesque masses, were all blended in a series of rich and varied prospects,

which could not fail to please the eye and charm the imagination of even the coldest observer.

A walk of some two or three miles brought me to the pleasantly situated and newly built inn at Ganllwyd, called the 'Oakley Arms.' This house is erected close to the road leading from Maentwrog to Dolgelley, and within a stone's throw of the roaring river Mawddach. It is encircled by majestic hills, which were then mostly covered with heath and fern in blossom, giving an appearance of richness and beauty even to the most arid and barren parts. Immediately before the house rises the mountain of Penrhos, the river washing its base. On the right hand, apparently at the end of the vale, appears Cefn Mawr; while behind, as if to protect this charming retreat from the westerly gales, winds the long and broad range of Craig Gau.

This little inn at Ganllwyd presents an admirable station for the artist, the angler, and the lover of nature. It is, for the hardy pedestrian, within an easy journey of numerous remarkable points of scenery, embracing four lakes and six rivers, besides numberless rippling mountain-streams, some of which abound with cataracts or falls. A gentleman who was staying at this inn while I was there, showed me, as a great curiosity, the handbill of a person who was, for many years, a guide to the surrounding scenery. The following is an extract from this facetious publication:—  
 'Robert Edwards, second son of the celebrated tanner, William Edwards, ap Griffith, ap Morgan, ap David, ap Owen, ap Llewellyn, ap Cadwaladar; great great great grandson of an illegitimate daughter of the illustrious hero Sir Rice ap Thomas! by Anne, daughter of Howell ap Jenkin, of Ynys y Maesgwyn; who was the thirteenth in descent from Cadwgan, a lineal descendant of Bled-dyn, ap Cynfyn, Prince of Powis. Since his nativity full two and eighty times hath the sun rolled to his summer solstice; fifty years was he host of the Hen and Chickens ale-house, Pen y bont, twenty of which he was apparitor to the late Reverend Father in God, John, Lord Bishop of Bangor, and his predecessors: by

chance made a glover, by genius a fly-dresser and angler. Is now by the All-Divine assistance, conductor to and over the most tremendous mountain, Cader Idris, to the stupendous cataracts of Cayne and Mawddach, and to the enchanting cascades of Dol y Melynllyn, with all its beautiful and romantic scenery.'

Dr. Mavor, who employed this oddity, says, in his tour, 'he is a slender man, about five feet four inches in height, and notwithstanding his advanced age, hopped and skipped about the room with all the vivacity and agility of a school-boy. The manner in which he expresses himself is as droll as his appearance. He was dressed in a blue coat with yellow buttons, a pair of old boots, and a cocked hat and feather of enormous size. His whole air was military, though he had never been a soldier. He procured several little horses. Nothing could be so amusing as to see the guide, *en militaire*, with a long white rod in his hand, like another Merlin, setting out on a full canter from the door of the inn, on his Welsh poney, followed by a little cavalcade, who could scarcely keep their seats for laughter. He talked much of *curiosity-men*, meaning naturalists; and enumerated among his followers some eminent names in science and literature; among the rest, Sir Joseph Banks and the late Earl of Bristol.'

Highly gratified with the attention shown me at this neat and inexpensive inn,—where, if the tourist does not find such costly accommodation and varied fare as at the large hotels of the Principality, he will yet receive the substantial cheer of eggs and bacon, fowls, &c. with trout and salmon fresh from the river beside the house,—I pursued my route along the high road to the fine estate of Dolymelynllyn, which is nearly covered with forest trees and primeval underwood. I was highly delighted with this luxuriant and secluded place, where, I think, the beauties of forest scenery exceed even the grandest parts of the park of Nannau. The oak, lime, walnut, and ash, are of magnificent dimensions, but nothing can exceed the beauty and exuberance of the acacia in this neighbourhood. I had visited this sylvan retreat a few months

before, when spring was arraying the trees, shrubs, and flowers in their early yet interesting and charming foliage. Then the beautiful pastoral lines of the poet Clare often occurred to my mind,—his exquisite descriptions freshening even the face of nature :

‘ Bowing adorers of the gale,  
Ye cowslips delicately pale,  
    Upraise your loaded stems ;  
Unfold your cups in splendour, speak !  
Who decked you with that ruddy streak,  
    And gilt your golden gems ?

‘ Violets, sweet tenants of the shade,  
In purple’s richest pride arrayed,  
    Your errand here fulfil ;  
Go bid the artist’s simple stain  
Your lustre imitate, in vain,  
    And match your Maker’s skill.

‘ Daisies, ye flowers of lowly birth,  
Embroiderers of the carpet earth,  
    That stud the velvet sod ;  
Open to spring’s refreshing air,  
In sweetest smiling bloom declare  
    Your Maker and my God.’

Through the estate of Dolymelynlyn rolls the river Camlan, which is one continued series of falls from its source, high among the mountains, to its junction with the Mawddach in the valley below. One of the larger falls (which, in reality, forms three falls) is called the Rhaiadr Du, where the water tumbles over rocks more than fifty feet in height, which, especially after heavy rain, occasions a tremendous roar.\* The surrounding scenery is well wooded, and the rocks on each side of the rapid stream

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\* The writer is much obliged to the occupant of this property, Mr. R. Roberts, for his attention, without which he would have had some difficulty in finding the falls.







1875-1876

W. Radcliffe

THE NARROW BRIDGE AT WYLLA, N. I.  
*Illustration*

The N. I. Bridge at Wylla, N. I. is a fine example of the work of the N. I. Bridge Co.





are mostly covered with white lichen. When the observer is seated on the hill above the falls, the opposite mountain of Penrhos is seen closing the extent of the vale. On this hill are two copper mines, and on Vigra, Cae Mawr, Penrhos, and Dolyfrwynog, are several others.

Passing over Pont Camlan, I regained the road towards Maentwrog, and crossed a bridge over a bold river, which I thought to be the Mawddach. Here the country is richly wooded, and the hazle, the hawthorn, the honeysuckle, and blackberry intermingle in the hedges. A ramble of about two miles brought me to the noble cataract of the Mawddach, where the river foams over high rocks, and where the scenery is exceedingly grand and picturesque. Not far from this fall is another of greater extent, called Pistyll y Cayne, but I did not see it to much advantage from a continuance of dry weather. Viewed, however, from the summit of the hill, with the magnificence of the prospect below, the rich, dark woods and the bold hills, the scene at once rivets and enchants the eye.

Rambling on my solitary way towards Transfynydd, I was considerably amused, on meeting the villagers and market women, to observe their tenacious love of the large, round beaver hat, the full sleeves, and dressy neck-kerchiefs. They looked cheerful and happy, and were mostly engaged in knitting as they passed by me; no bad example, I thought, to the young and old in other countries.

As I proceeded, the scenery soon became changed for features of a more sombre hue, with coarse, bleak heath, which continued till I reached Transfynydd. Almost every village in the Principality has some natural curiosity or remnant of antiquity, which, in the eyes of a tourist, confers a degree of interest on its neighbourhood, and Transfynydd is not, in this respect, without its attractions. A common near it is traversed by a Roman road, supposed to have been constructed by Helena, daughter of a British prince, and wife of the Emperor Maximus. It is at present only to be distinguished by its elevation above the general

level of the plain, being completely covered with turf; but on digging, the several layers of stones with which it is formed are easily discovered. Cromlechs, also, and carnedds are numerous in the hills, which, though now bare, were anciently, in many places, covered with forests of oak.

Arriving within about three miles from Maentwrog, I turned by a cross road to the right for Ffestiniog. It was here I observed a remarkable effect,—I might say, as regarded my own experience, a natural phenomenon, though by no means considered so, I was told, at this period of the year, in Wales,—that of the sky around being heavy and black, with the clouds resting on the hills, while the sun shone brightly on the wooded and green mountain of Moelwyn, at a distance of four miles,—by which the perspective illusion of every object appearing close to and clearly before the eye was produced. Passing over Pont Cynfael, I soon reached Ffestiniog, which is built on an eminence overlooking the picturesque vale.





TABLE OF PRESENTING.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

FFESTINIOG, BALA, LLANDRILLO, &c.

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WHEN at the peep of dawn  
The traveller bounds, with active spirits light,  
O'er the fresh meads, that round his path diffuse  
Fragrance, gay hope attunes her fairy voice  
Delightful, and the heart responsive beats  
To the sweet cadence of her syren song ;  
Thus light, at early dawn, my footsteps haste  
Along the path-way stealing to the vale.

*Sotheby.*

EARLY the ensuing morning, I set out on a pedestrian excursion to the delightful vale of Ffestiniog, taking the old road, which, on one side, is bounded by a deep ravine, and on the other is overgrown by firs, whose darkening shadow, with the whistling of the autumnal blast from the hollow of the hills, sweeping the falling leaves across my path, communicated a peculiarly gloomy air to the landscape, contrasting strangely with the glowing tints of the dawn, the warbling of birds, and the sounds of rural industry or mirth. A noble sunrise and a brightening sky augured one more of those enviable days I had hitherto enjoyed ; yet I had gone but a little way before a heavy mist—half fog, half rain—came driving up the distant valley, and in a few minutes completely enveloped the whole scene as in a cloud. In the hope it would as quickly pass, I took shelter under a hedge, where, however, I found myself in an ant's nest, and not relishing their extreme familiarity, and seeing no prospect of the weather clearing up, I was fain to push forward, feeling, though for the first time, not in the best possible humour with pedestrianism.

Before proceeding far I was considerably perplexed by discovering a cross-road without finger-posts, and while pausing in doubt which path to take, a young wild bull came dashing down the ravine, as though, in his fury, he would put an end an once to all my earthly dilemmas. Fortunately, he reserved his strength for a more equal antagonist—for I was completely unarmed—and, passing me by, merely suggested, with a bellow, the propriety of carrying on all future excursions an iron-headed staff, like the naboot of the Arabs, which I earnestly recommend to all pedestrians in all countries where bulls, mad dogs, and other dangerous animals may chance to put the way-farer's courage—if not his life—in jeopardy.

Pedestrian miseries, however, which fly before a gleam of sunshine—a shepherd's path, if lost among the hills,—the smoke of some distant cottage, or the village spire at evening's fall,—are not the most difficult to be borne; and, as I advanced, the sight of the far-swelling hills,—the sunlit summits towering beyond,—the silvery Dwyryd stealing along luxuriant fields and meadows,—the lofty wooded mountains, which flank the sides of the opening vale, all conspired to awaken emotions only the more pleasurable from the passing gloom of the morning.

I had already beheld the valley so much extolled by Lord Lyttelton—and, indeed, by every one who has described it—from different points, and under every variety of aspect. The approach to it from the gloomy wildness of Aberglasslyn, the road winding far under overhanging precipices, is full of beauty, rendered more novel and pleasing from its singular contrast. I had looked upon its glittering stream, when at the full, from the bold eminence below which it lies embosomed, whence the white sail could scarcely be discovered, and the fishermen on its banks became but a mere speck. I had beheld it more nearly in its lovely features, from the pleasant inn at Tan y Bwlch—from the bridge at Maentwrog, and the bold acclivities above—along the banks of the meandering river, and, not the least, from its elevated and

salubriously situated hamlet of Ffestiniog. But under no view had it presented itself, as a whole, in so charming a combination of objects, and in all its softer and most attractive features, as when I then beheld it about a mile below Maentwrog; its rock-strewn, sedgy banks, the lake-like waters of the Traeth, its wooded prospects, its picturesque objects, and white edifices upon the acclivities, half hidden by groves of rich and varied foliage, with the more boldly variegated hills rising above hills swelling into the distance. It was here, I thought, while contemplating the repose and beauty of the scene, that the idea of a retired life had charms even for the breast of a peer. 'With the woman one loves,' says Lord Lyttelton to his friend Mr. Bower, 'one might pass an age in this vale, and think it a day. If you have a mind to live long and renew your youth, come and settle at Ffestiniog. Not long ago there died in this neighbourhood an honest Welsh farmer, who was one hundred and five years of age. His youngest son was eighty-one years younger than his eldest, and eight hundred persons, his lineal descendants, attended his funeral.' The salubrity of this particular district might be recommended by numerous other authorities. Mrs. Jane Price, who resided in this neighbourhood, was at the period of her decease surrounded by twelve children, forty-seven grand-children, and thirteen great grand-children.

More than once, also, from its peculiar site and pleasant aspect, the vale of Ffestiniog has not undeservedly, by those who have observed the characteristic features of both, been compared with the more celebrated vale of Tempe. But it stands in need of no classical resemblances to enhance its natural beauties, when beheld, richly wooded and finely watered, in the glowing hues of autumn, when the departing sun, illumining the surrounding peaks, reflects a radiant light upon the scene, which may well remind the traveller of the most lovely spots which he has ever visited in other lands. It is then that the little hamlet and the church of Maentwrog, situated midway on the declivity of its

verdant eminence, appear with most picturesque effect, and the river Dwyryd, fed by the Cynfael and another neighbouring mountain-torrent, gives a silvery splendour to the prospect, combined with all that variegated beauty which is seen in no other Cambrian vale. From its site at the head of the vale, the village of Ffestiniog offers a delightful sojourn for the stranger anxious to explore the peculiar beauties of the neighbouring scenery. The Traeth Bychan, or the small sands, are chiefly produced by the river which waters this pleasant vale, and which becomes navigable a short distance below Maentwrog.

Upon the northern side, on a lofty eminence, rises Tan y Bwlch-hall, a handsome mansion, surrounded by those extensive woods already mentioned, which give so distinctive a feature to this district, presenting a marked contrast to the bleak, barren tracts extending beyond in the direction of Pont Aberglasslyn. Here, as well as in the country about Tan yr Allt, the progress of agricultural improvement was sufficiently observable. The late proprietor, like Mr. Maddocks, by means of extensive embankments, recovered much valuable property from the inundations which, at spring-tides, usurped the richest tracts of the vale, and, by subsequent draining, converted the spongy soil of which it is chiefly composed into a rich, productive loam. This laudable undertaking, instead of having deteriorated the picturesque effect of the surrounding landscape, appears to have given fresh life and beauty to the whole scene, as the terrace-walks, gardens, shrubberies, and small canals—formed by the large drains—seem to blend naturally with the localities of the soil. The vale itself is barely three miles in length, the broadest portion of it not exceeding one.

Near the village of Ffestiniog (the ‘place of hastening’) are the falls of the Cynfael. The way to them lies across the fields, in a pretty direct line from the front of the inn, and then winds through a wood to the first fall, the distance being about half a mile. The upper one rushes over three projections of dark rock, which rise like stairs one above another. It is surrounded by trees,

intermingled with huge pieces of rock ; while the darkness and solitude of the place are increased by branches overhanging the rapid stream from each of its banks. A few yards lower down, rises a bold columnar rock, called Pulpit Hugh Lloyd Cynfael, or Hugh Lloyd's Pulpit; passing which, and crossing the river by means of a rustic stone bridge, within five minutes' walk is seen the second fall. It is much less extensive than the other, and precipitates itself in a broad stream down a shelving rock about forty feet in height. It then bounds along a narrow chasm, and, struggling among the many-coloured rocks, reflects a variety of tints as it falls from slope to slope, till, finding a more even bed, it at length meanders quietly through the vale and mingles with the waters of the bay.

The surrounding prospect, from the hills, is indeed magnificent, and I found Lord Lyttelton's description of it at once graphic and correct. 'The morning being fair, I ventured to climb to the top of a mountain, not, indeed, so high as Snowdon, which is here called Moel Gwdion, but one degree lower than that called Moel Hebog, or Hill of the Hawk, from whence I saw a phenomenon, new to my eyes, but common in Wales; on the one side was midnight, on the other bright day. The whole extent of Snowdon, on our left, was wrapt in clouds from top to bottom; on the right, the sun shone most gloriously over the sea-coast of Caernarvon. The hill on which I stood was perfectly clear, the way I came up was a tolerably easy ascent; but before me was a precipice of many hundred yards, and below a vale which, though not cultivated, has much savage beauty,—the sides were steep and fringed with low wood. There were two little lakes, or rather large pools which stood in the bottom, whence issued a rivulet which serpentine in view for two or three miles, offering a pleasing relief to the eye.'

The vicinity, like that of most of the Cambrian wilds and fastnesses, when under the dominion of the native princes and heads of tribes, was more than once made subservient to purposes of

treachery and revenge. Howel, one of the kings of North Wales, had, it appears, two uncles—Iago and Edwal Vychan. The former having married Helen, he, on that or some other trivial ground, had him cast into prison; and the latter he caused to be murdered in cold blood. Constantine, called the Black, the son of Iago, being instigated by his mother to seek revenge for his father's wrongs, on reaching manhood, raised an army of Welsh and Danes, (in 979) and invaded the tyrant's dominions. While returning through Caernarvon towards Ffestiniog, his heroic mother led the van, and he brought up the rear. Having gone about eight miles, he came to a defile, bounded by two mountains, Mynidd Vawr on the right, upon which stood castle Cedwm, and Moel Elyan on the left, a narrow pass, forming one of the outgards to the entrance into Snowdon, and the channel of a small river flowing from the lake Cwellyn at the foot of Snowdon. So closely do the mountains here approach each other, that there is barely space for a single passenger. Young Constantine had nearly cleared the defile, when suddenly an arrow, from an unknown hand, arrested his path: 'Are you wounded?' cried a voice, which came from the summit of the castle that rose from the adjacent hill. 'I am!' replied the young prince, as he drew the arrow from the wound. 'Then you are a dead man,' answered his treacherous cousin—for it was Howel,—'the arrow is poisoned and sent by me.' It was speedily fatal, and the tidings far too speedily reached the ear of her who had spurred him on to the enterprise, and who on receiving it, is said to have exclaimed, in her sorrow, 'This is a cross hour!' and it is farther averred that the side gate, at which she stood, still bears the name to this day of Cross Hour.

I made an excursion from Ffestiniog to the grand cataract and glen called Rhaiadr Cwm. This rude and stupendous scene is observed from the road leading towards Ysptyty Evan and Pentre Foelas; but, to appreciate its sublimity, the tourist should descend the mountain, which, however, is almost an unfrequented solitude, although the neighbouring roads have recently been much im-







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proved. Seen, as I had the opportunity, in the deepening shadows of a calm autumnal evening, with the clouds rising over the heights above, the immensity of the rocks, and the wildness of the scene, gave rise to feelings of wonder and surprise. Scrambling over the heath and rocks, I reached an angle of a cliff, midway in the ascent, where the grandeur of the surrounding scenery cannot fail to interest the timid observer, who, perhaps, would not dare to venture lower into the glen. The little stream is noticed, in its almost perpendicular course, sparkling over the rocks, after which it dashes its crystal waters through the obstructions of the vale. The surrounding mountains are bleak and precipitous, and the vale, heathy and barren, appears more striking after viewing the rich and varied landscapes in the vale of Ffestiniog.

I pursued my way to Bala over hills and moors presenting a number of bold and splendid views, especially of the lakes and rivers, which present themselves on successive openings. The varying aspect under which the Bwlch y Buarth and Arrennig mountains were presented to the eye, the more distant heights fading in the clouds, the river, which, gliding at the foot of its parent hills, at length blends with the adjacent lake, altogether wanted little of the sublime features of Alpine prospects to impress the mind of the beholder.

Bala, and its fine, expansive lake, have attractions peculiar to themselves. To appreciate them as they deserve, the tourist should first ascend the craggy summit of the neighbouring mountain, and gaze upon the rude glens beyond, through which the boisterous Twrch rushes in a succession of resounding falls. It is by contrasting the wilder and fiercer tracts of the landscape with its milder features round the quiet hamlet and smooth unvarying lake, that we add fresh zest to the interchange of feelings ever open to the Cambrian traveller, and which, perhaps, made Lord Lyttelton here so sensible of the superior beauty of the women, when he observes that he saw, at Bala, some of the prettiest girls he ever beheld. And for the same reason, I perfectly agree with him in

extolling, not only the inanimate beauties of the place, but the countenances of the women, no less than the character of the country round the lake, which reminded me much of English scenery—that of the English lakes, with the wooded slopes, and calm glassy surface of Windermere. Rather singularly, also, the lake of Bala is known by the name of *Pimblemere*; it is the most extensive in Wales, embracing more than four miles in length, three quarters of one in breadth, and lies some distance south of the town. Its utmost depth is said to be about forty feet; and it is one of the few traditions of the neighbourhood that the Dee, like the Rhone with respect to the lake of Geneva, flows directly through without losing its stream or mingling its waters with those of the lake. One curious proof adduced is said to be that salmon found in the river are never found in the lakes, but this is thought to be no conclusive argument, from the fact that fish, as well as birds, seek out by instinct the haunts most agreeable to them, and most convenient for food and shelter. The water of the lake is said to be so pure, that the nicest chemical tests can detect scarcely any quantity of foreign admixture.

Be it as it will, the lake has abundance of pike, perch, trout, and roach, with shoals of a sort of fish called *gwyniad*, from the extreme whiteness of its scales. It is a gregarious fish, often found in the Alpine lakes, more especially those of Switzerland. Its weight rarely exceeds four pounds, and its flavour is by many persons considered rather insipid; a circumstance that by no means recommends the gallantry of the noble author already mentioned, when he assures his friends that it is so exquisitely delicate as to more than rival in flavour the lips of the fair maids of Bala themselves. From this unmeasured strain of encomium, I suspect that Lord Lyttelton has here been describing that pearl of all lake-fish, the white char; and, if as unrivalled in relish as that which I once eat at Battermere, I could join his lordship in any degree of praise short of that by which he tries to give a superlative idea of its sweetness. But being so very good, and, like the ladies of Bala,





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perhaps, sensible of their attractions, these fish have the shrewdness to keep out of harm's way, as we are told, by remaining at the bottom of the water, where they feed on small shells and aquatic plants, from which no bait but that of a deep-plumbed, irresistible net can induce them to emerge. In former times the fishery is stated to have formed part of the possessions attached to Basingwerk Abbey, but has since fallen into the hospitable hands of that public-spirited and hearty friend of the Principality, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Baronet, who has pitched his tent, in the shape of a neat hunting-box, quite according to the Irish rule, 'convaniant to the spot.'

Though now so calm and beautiful,—reflecting all the quiet and clearness of the heavens upon its breast, as the swallow skimmed its glassy surface, and the wild-fowl sought their home in its little bays and creeks,—the aspect of Bala Lake, when the storm is up, and 'the winter wild' puts on his terrors, can assume a very different kind of beauty. To see it when the autumnal winds ruffle its broad expanse with billows, or the clouds discharge their contents as fiercely as the torrent from the hills,—when the drifting rack and snow-storm mingle the last leaves of the year with the scattered beauty of the meads and gardens, the observer can no longer recognise the least resemblance in the characteristics of the two landscapes—the Bala of the opposite seasons.

Upon the north-east side, the water sometimes rises many feet above its usual level. When the winds and the rains, as I was informed, 'meet and combine the whole of their forces,' it is a grand sight to see the lake overshoot its banks, and rush far beyond into the noble valley of old Edeirnion. Once, in the month of June, 1781, a part of the vicinity is believed to have been inundated by one of those singular occurrences—the bursting of an overcharged cloud, called a water-spout, which, however frequently beheld at sea, seldom visits the earth. It was attended by terrific lightning and continuous rain, which caused the Twrch—fed by torrents from the Bwlch y Groes hills—to overflow and sweep

every thing before it. The spoils of fields and villages, and even human life, marked the progress of the flood ; and as far as Ruthin the rising of the rivers suddenly burst on the ear of the affrighted people. The scene round Bala is described by one of the oldest inhabitants as heart-rending and terrific. The deep and dismal chasm, spanned by the one-arched bridge of Llyn Dyffw, through which the resounding torrent of the Glyn pours its flood down the wildest rocky falls, exhibited a magnificent sight, swelled by the mountain rains into one immense volume of foaming cataract, which again bursting from its black and caverned bed through the deep wooded glens beyond, rolled its unusual mass of burdened torrents to join the waters of the Dee. Huge branches, and some of the large forest-trees themselves, which threw a gloomier shadow over the stormy scene, were uprooted by the maddening torrents and launched into the yawning deep. The lake rose with the impulse of the storm till it assumed the aspect of a wild and restless sea, keeping stern music with the crashing of the neighbouring woods and the whistling of the blast, while, drowning the roar of the torrent, the thunder ever and anon startled the ear, and lurid flashes opening the sky exhibited for a moment the troubled firmament to view.

## CHAPTER XIX.

LLANDRILLO, WELSHPOOL, POWIS CASTLE, MONTGOMERY, &c.

‘ ————— NATURE here  
Wantons as in her prime ; and plays at will  
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweets,  
Wild above rule or art.’

QUITTING Bala, and its expansive lake and scenery, differing so much from all other Cambrian llyns and glens, I proceeded by the side of the river Dee till I reached the village of Llandrillo. It was about a mile hence that Mr. Pennant crossed the Dee over Pont Gillan, which has two arches across a deep, black bed of waters, beyond which, however, the valley assumes new beauties, richly contrasting with the stupendous heights, covered with ancient oak, towering above. The scenery round this spot is described by the great tourist as worthy the pencil of a Salvator. Mr. Bingley, on the other hand, passed Llandrillo at the distance of three miles, crossing the Dee at Landerfel, another small village. The church of this place, according to the old Chronicle, had the honour of containing a large image of Derfel Gadarn, its patron saint; and the Welsh prophecy ran, that this single wooden likeness would some day set a whole forest on fire. Accordingly, on the execution of Doctor Forest, for treason, in 1538, it was taken from its nook, and put under him to excite the fuel when he was burned in Smithfield.

From Llandrillo I passed by a footpath over the mountains immediately between Cader Fronwen and Cader Ferwyn, two

eminences in the range of the great Berwyn hills.\* Turning thence to the right, on reaching the summit of these Alpine heights, a short walk of two miles brought me within view of the grand waterfall called Pistil Rhaiadr, at least two hundred feet in extent; and though destitute of the magnificent foliage which gives so splendid a contrast to some other cataracts—rich in under-wood and forest trees—young plantations are rising on every side. It is formed by the little river Rhaiadr, which, after the boisterous raging of the falls, quietly murmurs through a sylvan dell, and, dividing the counties of Denbigh and Montgomery, soon unites with the river Tanat. Near the waterfall is a pleasant little inn, built by Sir W. W. Wynn. A farther walk of four miles, through the bold valley of Mochnant, presents to the eye the picturesque village of Llanrhaidr yn Mochnant, encompassed by mountains of varied form and colour, blending well with the character of the scene.

The parish in which this little village is situated has been long noted for its vicars, among whom was the learned Dr. Morgan—already mentioned—the translator of the Bible into his native tongue, and successively Bishop of Llandaff and of St. Asaph; and the no less erudite and more facetious Dr. South. Not having space for the purpose here, I must be content to refer my readers to the biography of this learned divine for some interesting anecdotes—not a few of them, also, very amusing—which will amply repay the perusal.

About twenty miles from Llanrhaidr, I approached Welshpool, the most spacious and important of the towns of Montgomeryshire. It has one main street, crossed by small ones at right angles, and the houses are neat and well built. The language spoken, and the manners of the people, are almost altogether English.

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\* These would seem to be mere variations of the same generic name, bestowed, probably, by the popular taste for the sake of euphony, of which we may perceive numerous examples in the rural nomenclature of the Principality.

The water formerly upon the waste is now comprehended within the enclosure of Powis Park. It is a deep, black water, thought to be unfathomable, of which the Welsh are fond of repeating an old prophecy, that it will some time overflow and deluge the town. The church—singularly situated in a hollow of the hill, with a cemetery as high as itself—is built in the pointed, but not ancient, style, and dedicated to St. Mary. It possesses a chalice of pure gold, worth one hundred and seventy pounds. The county-hall, a modern edifice, is erected in the centre of the town, and presents an elegant appearance, having a handsome front, with a colonnade and pilasters of stone. There is every convenience for the administration of justice, and no less for the accommodation of the people. The Severn is navigable for barges to a place called Pool quay, a mile from the town, and upwards of two hundred miles from its mouth in the Bristol channel.

Powis Castle, the seat of Lord Clive, is situated on an eminence, about a mile south of Welshpool, and one of the outer entrances to the park is on the very edge of the town. A considerable portion is built of red stone, from which the natives call it *Castell Coch*, or the Red Castle. It is an extensive and venerable building, without much pretension to architectural taste, and has been greatly extended and improved by the present noble owner.

The original building was commenced in 1109, by Cadwgan ap Cynfyn, who was murdered by his nephew, and left the building unfinished. It was continued by Gwynwynwyn, who was governor of this part of Powys land. Llewellyn ap Jorwerth dismantled the castle in 1233. It was again completed, and remained in the possession of Owen ap Gryffydd. On his demise he left a daughter whose claims were disputed; but, being shortly afterwards married, the King ennobled her husband by the title of Baron Powys; and the estates continued for several centuries in the possession of their descendants. At the time of the Civil Wars in the seventeenth century, Piercy, Lord Powys, declared for the Royal cause and garrisoned his castle, of which he took the com-

mand in person. He was, however, compelled to surrender to the Parliamentary forces, under General Myddelton, in 1644. On this occasion the walls were greatly damaged by the cannon of the assailants, the place pillaged, and the noble owner himself taken prisoner. The castle and lordship were confiscated to the use of the Parliament; but the proprietor afterwards compounded for and obtained possession of them again.

The magnitude of this elevated pile of building is observed, with the greatest effect, on the road leading towards Montgomery, whence its embattled turrets are seen rising above the magnificent trees by which they are nearly surrounded. I was delighted with my ramble over different parts of the park, which is formed of gently rising hills clothed with trees, and pleasant lawns where the dappled deer added to the charm of the scene. From the upper part, in clear weather, the distant mountains of Plinlimmon, Cader Idris, and Snowdon, are seen. The principal entrance is a gateway between two massy round towers. In front it is approached by two immense terraces, rising one above the other by a flight of steps, adorned with statues, vases, &c.

On the grand staircase is some very fine tapestry by Lanscroun, with the date of 1705; and the work on the ceiling represents the coronation of Queen Anne. The apartments on the ground-floor are rather gloomy, from the great thickness of the walls. The views from the windows of the dining and drawing rooms are very fine, presenting the extensive and richly wooded park, the vistas opening at intervals, the valley of the Severn, and a wide extent of country, including the Breiddin hills, which are surmounted by three peaks, on one of which is built the obelisk commemorating the victory of Admiral Lord Rodney over the French fleet, in the West Indies, in 1782.

Lord Clive's collection of paintings, particularly portraits, is numerous. Those by Sir Peter Lely are very fine, and in excellent preservation. I think the most interesting pictures are the portraits of the Duchess of Powis, King Charles the Second,

that eccentric genius Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, and Henrietta, Queen of Charles the First. There is a full-length portrait of Roger Palmer, Earl of Castlemain, the husband of that intriguing beauty, the Duchess of Cleveland. He is drawn according to the costume of the time, in a black wig and scarlet mantle, and is in the act of dictating to his secretary, when envoy from James the Second to the Pope. The object he had in view was to obtain a pardon from his holiness for the sin of heresy into which these realms had fallen. The Pope himself could not conceal his ridicule of such a proceeding as the attempt to reconcile the two dissevered churches, and he was invariably seized with a fit of coughing when the Earl touched upon his embassy. At length, wearied with delay, the Earl gave notice to his holiness that he was about to pack up his credentials and quit Rome; and with equal coolness the representative of St. Peter replied, that in that case he would, with the most cordial affection, recommend him 'to set off early in the morning, and to rest at noon, lest by over excitement, and the effect of the heat, he should chance to endanger his health.' In a small, dark room, I observed a portrait of the present Lady Clive, commenced by Sir Thomas Lawrence, but finished in a very different style to that of this eminent man, by an artist whose name I did not learn.

The aspect of the scenery around, like that of the mansion, has more recently partaken of the new and more natural manner of setting-off the advantages of nature combined with art. For the artist who delights in wild forest scenery, or pastoral quiet, Powis park will supply a continued treat. The verdant spreading lawns, the swelling hills, and rich variety of wooded views, together with the distant hills and woods mingling with the sky, at the moment I contemplated them, in the soft glow of an autumnal eve, shed a benign influence over the mind.

It was with singular pleasure that I listened to the commendations—given with earnestness and good-will, when no interest was to be derived—of the kind deportment and benevolent disposition

uniformly displayed by the proprietor of Powis Castle, and of his sense of justice, his liberality to many in time of need, and the manner in which he steps forward to promote the happiness and improvement of his tenantry.

At a short walk from Welshpool is the beautiful vale of Cyfeiliog, and, at the foot of the Breiddin hills, the ruins of the Cistercian Monastery, called Ystradd Marchell, founded in 1170. To the north of Welshpool are seen, rising sternly above the valley, Moel y Golfaf, Craig Breiddin, and the triforked summits of a rock more than one thousand feet in height. On the loftiest peak stands the obelisk erected to commemorate the great victory achieved by Rodney. Here I caught the distant views of the solitary Wrekin, the vast chain of contiguous hills, the summits of Snowdon on the north, and Cader Idris to the west.\* The vale, through which the Severn pursues its course, is beheld extending far below.

The way to Newtown, through the valley, almost parallel with the river, and studded with pleasant villages, surmounted by richly wooded hills, on one of which rises a little temple,—presents many lovely views. On this occasion, instead of turning to the left when about a mile from Welshpool, and taking the direct road to Montgomery, I proceeded on that towards Newtown as far as the village of Berriew. On my left ran the Severn, and to my right, just above the road, rose a succession of lofty hills, richly clothed with wood; and, nearer the Montgomeryshire canal, which frequently intersects the road, is caught at intervals by the eye. From Berriew again, leaving the road to Newtown, I took the path to the left, and, at a short distance, crossed the bridge over the Severn. It was here, on proceeding a little way, that I observed, on the top of an eminence, on the other side of which lies the

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\* The botanist may here find pleasure in meeting with the *Veronica Hybrida*, the *Potentilla rupestres*; and on the steeper parts of Craig Breiddin, *Pyrus Aria*; in other spots *Pteris Crispa*, *Cotyledon lutea*, *Sedum rupestre*, *Papaver Cambricum*, *Chlora Perfoliata*, *Lichnis Viscaria*, &c. &c.

town, the picturesque effect of the ruins of the noble castle to which I was approaching. How strange a contrast to the fast-decaying monument of feudal days, and the associations it conjured up, did the whole scene exhibit, in the neat, well-conducted inn, the modern roads branching in various directions, and the farm house and yard usurping the old feudal tenure of baronial sway!

No spot in the Principality is more memorable in Cambrian history, for the singular events, the wild and daring feats of arms, the fierce contests, and succession of masters, which the Castle of Montgomery witnessed from the very foundation of the fortress to the period of the Civil Wars. The first strong-hold of the Marches, erected by Baldwyn, from whom the place was termed Tre Faldwyn, or Baldwyn's Town, a lieutenant of the Conqueror, to overawe the Welsh, its strength was not unfrequently turned against its original masters. It was again wrested from them by Roger Montgomery, Earl of Arundel and Shrewsbury, who, invading Powys land, took the town and castle, and, restoring their fortifications, gave to both the proud name which he bore. Yet, in one short year, with the surrounding country, it fell to the Welsh, who defied the power of William Rufus, and compelled the Normans to an ignominious retreat. Spite of a brave resistance, the Welsh, having levelled the walls, carried the place by storm; and it was not till after four years' incessant struggle that they were again driven to the mountains. The castle was rebuilt by the Earl of Shrewsbury, and a century elapsed ere it again fell before the fiery Britons. Subsequently, as at all previous periods, the fertile lands of Powys were esteemed too great a prize to be relinquished, and they became the battle-field not only of rival lords, but of princes and kings. Here, as in all great actions which threw a lustre on his country, the last of the Llewellyns met the banded hosts of England, and reaped that fame in arms which soon allied him to the royal House of the Norman Conquerors, and gave a transitory gleam of peace and prosperity to his suffering country. Summoned as a vassal to appear before the court of King Henry III., the

Prince replied by laying siege to the town, which he raised only at the approach of the King at the head of an immense army, before which he was compelled to retire after a severe conflict, but harrassed on its return. It was at this time that Henry restored the castle upon a site deemed so impregnable, and with such lines of defence, as would prove an effectual barrier to the future progress of the warlike Prince. Having placed in it a powerful garrison, and given the command to his grand justiciary, Hubert de Burgh, with honours and emoluments from the lordship of the Marches, the King withdrew in the idea that he had chastised the insolence of the lawless Welsh, and fixed a sharp curb on their predatory career. Hardly had the Royal leader reached the borders, watched by his wary foe, before numbers of the Welsh, pouring from their hills in the rear, boldly faced the new-built fortress frowning from its rock-based height, and, burning to achieve some bold action, while their Prince observed the retiring foe, they surrounded and summoned it to surrender. Maddened at such an insult from 'a wild horde of Welshmen,' the blood of De Burgh boiled to revenge it; and sallying forth with the whole of his veteran garrison, by feigning at first to be worsted he drew the Welsh farther into his toils, and turning on his assailants while another party took them in flank, a desperate and unsparing conflict ensued. But it could not be long doubtful; and so surely had the grand justiciary taken his measures, and relied on their success, that even the ladies of the castle, surrounding the young and beautiful Countess De Burgh, had been, as at a tournament, witnesses of the bold sally with as much pleasure as if at a contested election or a lord-mayor's day in our own times; and they were as eager to adorn the battlements with the heads of the wild men as with the ribands of some favourite candidate at present. The knowledge of being marked by the eyes of beauty sharpened the edge of Norman chivalry, and many a heart beat high, and fair bosoms heaved with love and pride, as the colours conferred on some favourite youth flew foremost in the frightful slaughter of the undisciplined moun-







Illustration, p. 10.

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THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN THE NETHERLANDS  
FROM MONSIEUR DE BRETIGNY



taineers. Individual valour could no longer meet the shock of the Norman; the rout was terrible, and great numbers of the Welsh were barbarously beheaded. The lovely countess averted her eyes from the sight; nature and humanity triumphed, though she sought to disguise her tears and terror from her less scrupulous companions.

It is recorded, that to retaliate so foul an injury, Llewellyn ap Iorwerth collected together numerous forces from various parts of Wales, and encamped on the side of the hill on which the castle is built. De Burgh, being intimidated, privately withdrew; and Llewellyn, gaining possession of the place, put the garrison to the sword, and burnt the fortress. The life of the countess was preserved by the skill and intrepidity of a few trusty knights and retainers, who conducted her safely out of the castle, by a postern gate, the evening before Llewellyn obtained an entrance.

Burning to avenge the destruction of their countrymen, the Welsh rushed into the castle, putting every living thing to the sword. The sight of hundreds of trunkless heads, strewn on all sides, roused them to the highest pitch of fury, and all the magnificence and beauty of the newly-erected castle became a prey to the flames. Not less indignant than his followers, Llewellyn afterwards levelled its blackened walls with the earth. A series of undecisive contests ensued, till, at length, in the year 1268, a conference was held at the very spot where these events took place, and a peace concluded between Henry and the Welsh, through the interposition of the Pope's legate, and signed in the once more restored and stately castle of Montgomery. This treaty was ratified by the respective princes in person, and received Pope Clement's sanction. The lands on both sides were restored; and due fealty and homage, with the more solid honour of twenty-five thousand marks, paid to the English king.

In 1345, the castle and manor of Montgomery, then comprised in the hundred of Cherbury, were in possession of Roger Mortimer; and after his attainder, though restored to the family, they even-

tually passed into the Royal House of York, by the marriage of Ann, heiress of the last earl, whence they came into possession of the Crown. The castle appears subsequently to have been held in stewardship by the ancestors of Lord Herbert of Cherbury; and it became the principal residence of that family. During the Civil Wars, it was garrisoned for Charles the First, who appointed Lord Herbert its governor; but, on the approach of the Parliamentary general, he took the opposite side.

The ruins now seen are part of the bold and lordly pile as it then stood, on the extremity of an impending eminence to the north of the town. The fragment of a tower, and some scattered walls, alone attest its former splendour and magnificence. The walls appear to have been of immense thickness, which must have caused the interior to wear a gloomy appearance. They, however, give us some idea of the formidable strength, combined with isolated grandeur, and of the false magnificence of the too much extolled age of chivalry. The castle was defended by four deep fosses, cut out of the solid rock, over which draw-bridges appear to have been thrown by way of security. The approach was by four shorter moats, with two entrances to the main work. The view from the summit embraces a large extent of country, the greater part of which, with its serfs and vassals, was at one period under the despotic sway of its lords. At the foot of the hill is traced a small fortification, with a sort of artificial mount raised on one side. This has been conjectured to be the site of its ancient foundation, by Baldwyn, bearing evident marks of the Norman fashion. Leland says, that in the fifteenth century the town was encircled by an immense wall, flanked with towers, and four massy gates, to protect the castle.

The church, an elegant building in the form of a cross, contains an ancient monument to the memory of Richard Herbert, father of the celebrated baron of the same name, and to Magdaline, his wife. Two recumbent figures repose under a magnificent canopy, and in front are seen the effigies of their numerous family. To-

wards the improvement of this church, Lord Clive, not long since, contributed the munificent sum of two thousand pounds.

The town has an air of peculiar neatness and gentility, not very usual in the Principality. It is chiefly inhabited by persons of middle rank, or small fortune, some of whom have selected it by way of economy, and some for 'learned leisure;' they have every thing which reason and nature can supply, and a succession of lovely and luxuriant scenes around them to charm the sight, with the rich prospect of Salopian woods and mountains gradually fading into the clouds. I no longer wondered at the enthusiastic eulogies bestowed upon it by different tourists, or that it should have been the favourite retreat of the sometime studious, sometime mad, yet witty in his eccentricities,—'all things by turns, and nothing long,'—of that true essence of nobility,—the Lord of Cherbury. A native of Montgomery, born in 1583, he was one of those geniuses who, like Swift, show no precocious maturity. Far from this, he says he was puny, and so backward in his speech that it was feared he would be dumb; but, he adds, that he knew what was said by others, and only refused to speak lest he should talk nonsense. As he got older, however, it seems that he pushed his way in the world very well; not merely mastering languages, but physic, music, and every other science,—if we are to believe him,—for which he took a fancy. When made a Knight of the Bath, he vowed that he would act up to his oath of knighthood, and permit no injustice to be done; that in case any lady or gentleman had the slightest complaint on the score of injured honour, he would see it well redressed. And he sometimes kept his word, as the thousand strange incidents and situations through which he passed, in his varied life of a soldier, a traveller, statesman, ambassador, adventurer, and recluse, must have offered him numerous occasions of doing to his heart's content. How singular that the very man who attempted to explode all belief in revelation as gross enthusiasm, should himself be one of the most extraordinary enthusiasts of his own or any time, and should publish a work no

Truth, the Latin title of which he caused to be engraven upon his tomb! Lord Herbert 'is said to have been the first author who reduced *deism* into a regular system, in which he asserted, and endeavoured to prove, the sufficiency, universality, and absolute perfection of natural religion, without the aid of supernatural or extraordinary communication of the Divine will.' Yet this same man, when he had finished his work, '*De Veritate*,' is stated to have put up a solemn prayer for a sign from heaven to determine him upon its publication, and that he interpreted a sudden noise as an imprimatur. 'There is no stronger characteristic of human nature, than its being open to the strongest contradictions: one of Lord Herbert's chief arguments against revealed religion is, the improbability that heaven should reveal its will to only a portion of the earth, which he terms particular religion. How could a man, who doubted of partial, believe individual revelation? What vanity to think his book of such importance to the cause of truth, that it could extort a declaration of the Divine will, which the interests of half mankind could not!''\*

Half a mile from Montgomery is Lymore Lodge, one of the seats of the Powis family. It is a very old building, chiefly of wood, and was once the residence of the before mentioned Lord Herbert. It is surrounded by an extensive park, containing some large pools, well stocked with fish, and, also, with wild fowl during the season. From this place there is a picturesque and striking view of the town of Montgomery, calmly reposing on the side of a hill whose summit towers above and is partly covered with trees. The church and ruins of the castle form prominent objects in the scene.

Winding my way leisurely through the park, I was startled by the sound of the horn, and the loud, cheering cry of a pack of fox hounds, taking their first autumnal field day, with all 'the pomp and circumstance' peculiar to the first breaking ground on these

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\* Lord Orford's *Royal and Noble Authors*, Vol. III. Page 16.

stirring occasions. The whole pack, with riders and pedestrians of all kinds, passing quickly before me, had such an enlivening and animating effect upon my mind, that I was induced to extend my walk to the neighbouring plantations. The fox, however, although seen in one of them the same morning, was no where to be found, to the chagrin and disappointment of all present. Sly renard, probably, was in one plantation while the dogs were in another, and, being aware of the danger, quietly stole away to the Shropshire hills. The hounds, I understood, were from Newtown, but occasionally hunted this district. They did not appear well managed, and were, perhaps, made up from two or three worn-out packs.

The Wanderer is now about to disappear for awhile from before the eyes of his readers. Such of them as have followed with interest and good-will his track along the lofty mountainous ridges, the deep and solemn ravines, and the rich valleys of the northern part of the Principality, may see him again appear, pursuing his pilgrimage with untiring step through the southern division of that ancient kingdom;—now mingling with the fashionable *coteries* of that most attractive of all watering places—ABERYSTWICH; and now wending his solitary way along the banks of that most enchanting of all rivers—THE WYE.

END OF NORTH WALES.



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